

The Basis For  
Constructing Curricular Materials  
In Adult Education  
For Carolina Cotton Mill Workers

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Greenville  
South Carolina



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## INTRODUCTION

✓ THIS study is an attempt to discover the shortages in the lives of Carolina cotton mill workers. The list of weak areas or shortages, which is given in Chapter VI of this monograph, may be used as the basis for selecting curricular materials for adult groups in cotton mill villages. A composite picture of the mill people and the life in the villages has been constructed in Chapters II, III, and IV. Shortages in the lives of the workers have been found by placing an attainable program, based on the thinking of outstanding Southerners, against the described conditions. Some suggested activities to meet the discovered needs have been drawn from educational practice in the adult field.

The study rests on a number of assumptions:

1. The shortages technique, which is used in this research, is accepted as a valid means of discovering the basis for constructing a curriculum for adult groups.
2. A summary picture that is based upon adequate research by experts is believed to be a reliable means of securing a true idea of the conditions in Carolina cotton mill villages.
3. A plan which is constructed from the writings of Southerners with a regional outlook is thought to be a valid standard for discovering the shortages of Carolina cotton mill people.
- ✓ 4. A program that is based on gradual rather than violent change is conceived to be sound educational procedure.
- ✓ 5. Education which places emphasis on the vital social and economic issues in a situation and which stimulates creativeness in the use of leisure time is accepted as the most hopeful type of adult activity.
- 6. Proposals which utilize all the available community agencies and create needed organizations are thought to be truly educative.
7. Action as well as discussion is accepted as a desirable outcome of the various projects which have been suggested.

The extensive bibliographical files of the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina were used in

securing the printed data on the Carolina cotton mill situation. All the promising material found in this bibliography was consulted. Original research on the socio-economic aspects of the study was carried on only when the data seemed inadequate.

Two questionnaires were used. One, which dealt with the mill people, was submitted to about fifty experts who ranged from labor organizers to mill presidents. The other questionnaire attempted to discover the village activities in South Carolina mill communities. This was sent to a hundred managers. Ninety per cent of the experts sent their reactions to the questionnaire on the mill people. About half of the mill managers answered the questions on village activities. Much of the evidence gained from the questionnaires was supplemented by the written materials consulted.

The writer also interviewed many experts and laymen of various political and social faiths in both the Carolinas. All these materials have been thrown into one composite picture of the Carolina cotton mill people and their life, presented in Chapters II, III, and IV of the study. Chapter I is a historical sketch of Carolina manufacturing.

The regional plan, which is described in Chapter V, is an attempt to draw from the writings of Southerners and others with a Southern background a practical program which is indigenous to the section. The sixth chapter is a list of the shortages that have been discovered by setting the regional plan against the described conditions. Some suggested activities for meeting the needs are placed opposite the shortages. The final chapter indicates means by which an adult education program may be introduced in a mill village.

The problem of documentation in this study has necessitated the use of an abbreviated system of footnotes. A master bibliography is arranged at the end of the book. The italicized numbers in the footnotes refer to the source material having that number in the bibliography.



## Chapter One

# THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CAROLINA MANUFACTURING

### THE COLONIAL AND ANTE-BELLUM MILLS

DURING the Colonial Period the British trade policies discouraged manufacturing by the colonists. However, the Southerners, who planted rice, indigo, and tobacco in the coastal region, were little disturbed by these regulations. They had no particular reason to manufacture, for they were prospering under the existing economy.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the small farmer began to settle in the Piedmont section in the middle of the eighteenth century. Cotton culture became more common, and many immigrants skilled in the making of textiles moved into the up-country Carolinas. Even though trade regulations were tightened, the Southern colonists continued to manufacture coarse cotton goods for home consumption.<sup>2</sup> In the last decade of the eighteenth century, from two-thirds to four-fifths of the clothing of the inhabitants of some regions was made at home.<sup>3</sup>

J Rion McKissick stated in an address at Asheville, North Carolina, that "white cotton goods, made in the proportion of 12 yards to one pound of cotton, were manufactured in St David's Parish as early as 1768."<sup>4</sup> Daniel Heyward had a cotton factory in 1777, and there was a plant on James Island, South Carolina, in 1787.<sup>5</sup> Before 1795 there was a weaving mill at Murray's Ferry, Williamsburg District, South Carolina.<sup>6</sup> Early North Carolina interest appears to have prompted a group in Chowan to name, as early as 1775, a committee for the promotion of manufacturing.<sup>7</sup>

The three decades following the Revolutionary War marked the high tide of domestic industry in the South. In 1810 the manufactured products of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia exceeded in value those of all New England.<sup>8</sup> And manufacturing plants

*Note* Italic numbers in footnotes refer to items in the Bibliography

<sup>1</sup> Herring in 36, pp 2-4    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>3</sup> 36, p 5    <sup>4</sup> 163, p 8    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*  
<sup>6</sup> 239, p 504    <sup>7</sup> 169, p 12.    <sup>8</sup> Herring in 36, p 5, 178, p. 92.

continued to be built. In 1812 the South Carolina legislature granted a loan of \$10,000 for the erection of a cotton mill in Greenville District, South Carolina. In the proposals for the factory, it was stated that five hundred spindles would prepare enough thread to weave two hundred and fifty yards of cloth a day.<sup>9</sup> The Schenck mill was built at Lincolnton, North Carolina, in 1813, and Governor D. R. Williams of Society Hill, South Carolina, was operating a yarn mill in 1816.<sup>10</sup>

The dominant economic philosophy of the National Period stimulated manufacturing. However, only a few public men in the South encouraged the building of mills, although the legislative bodies of both the Carolinas took steps to stimulate the erection of cotton factories. From 1828 to 1832 North Carolina chartered five new plants, and a number of mills were built on favorable sites in the Greenville and Spartanburg Districts, South Carolina. The famous Vacluse and Saluda mills, also, were erected during this period.<sup>11</sup>

The panic of 1837 and the low price of cotton in the 1840's caused a renewal of interest in cotton manufacturing. Partisan appeals for the erection of mills were not infrequent in newspapers and magazines.<sup>12</sup> James H. Hammond, William Gregg, George McDuffie, R. B. Rhett, J. D. B. DeBow, and others wrote and spoke for manufacturing.<sup>13</sup> William Gregg not only published articles and pamphlets on the wisdom of diversified economics, but established one of the most successful mills in the country at Graniteville, South Carolina.<sup>14</sup> But the general response to all these pleas was weak.

Logical arguments could not withstand the onslaught of more powerful forces in Southern life. Manufacturing and the Southern economy could not exist together. It will not be necessary to list the specific causes for the failure of ante-bellum manufactures which grew out of this cleavage. Suffice it to say that the plantation system was fundamentally responsible.<sup>15</sup> By 1850 the sectional lines were so sharply drawn that all encouragement to mill building in the South was abandoned.<sup>16</sup> In South Carolina George

<sup>9</sup> 163, p. 12. <sup>10</sup> Herring in 36, p. 5, 239, p. 545, 49, pp. 140-141. <sup>11</sup> Herring in 36, p. 6. <sup>12</sup> Herring in 36, pp. 7-8. <sup>13</sup> 55, pp. 310-312, 234, p. 288.

<sup>14</sup> 169, p. 33. For a detailed study of the benevolent despotism of this ante-bellum village, see Mitchell, Broadus, *William Gregg, 170*.

<sup>15</sup> 55, pp. 309-310, 178, pp. 4-5, 51, pp. 33-34. <sup>16</sup> Herring in 36, p. 8.

McDuffie turned against manufacturing and with Langdon Cheves aided John C. Calhoun in fighting for a perpetuation of the plantation economy. By 1853 the active campaign for Southern mills had almost entirely ceased.<sup>17</sup>

#### THE COTTON MILL CAMPAIGN

Harriet L. Herring believes that the

development of the textile industry in the South shows a curiously cyclical nature that has about it more than a little of the effects of human design added to the imponderable economic factors.<sup>18</sup>

Broadus Mitchell, another student of Southern industry, thinks that the South was not industrial or interested in manufacturing before the Civil War

The bias of these last ante-bellum years, lashed to passion by a guilty sectional conscience, or made more wild by the lack of any connected thinking, precluded even the possibility of industrialism.<sup>19</sup>

Holland Thompson agrees that

the whole structure of industrial society with all its connotations was obnoxious to a large part of the articulate South, and it is perhaps futile to speculate whether industrialism could have developed under slavery.<sup>20</sup>

At any rate, the decade before the Civil War showed an actual decline of manufacturing in South Carolina. In the whole South in 1850, there were 166 mills with a capitalization of \$7,256,056, whereas in 1860 there were only 165 plants with a capitalization of \$9,840,221.<sup>21</sup>

It is superfluous to point out that the South's manufacturing plants were worn out or destroyed by the Civil War and that its whole life was so blighted by Reconstruction that no vital interest in economic activity could be expected until the states had been restored to the native whites. "Reconstruction meant not only political, but also economic and social destruction."<sup>22</sup> However, there appears to have been some revival in manufacturing soon after 1865. Simkins and Woody see evidences of a public interest in manufacturing in South Carolina as early as 1870 and believe that the way for expansion after 1880 was prepared during

<sup>17</sup> Herring in 36, p. 9, 163, pp. 18-19

<sup>18</sup> Herring in 36, p. 9

<sup>19</sup> 169, p. 52

<sup>20</sup> Thompson in 36, p. 17

<sup>21</sup> 234, p. 239, 169, p. 63.

<sup>22</sup> 47, p. 45

Reconstruction<sup>23</sup> Victor S. Clark calls Reconstruction "a germinal period for manufactures"<sup>24</sup>

Broadus Mitchell in *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South*<sup>25</sup> gives the results of considerable research which show that the cotton mill campaign of the 1880's was not a revival, but a new movement. R. H. Edmonds,<sup>26</sup> Edgar Gardner Murphy,<sup>27</sup> Holland Thompson,<sup>28</sup> and Victor S. Clark<sup>29</sup> believe otherwise. The thorough study of Professor Mitchell, however, impels one to accept his findings.

The campaign began in North Carolina in the late 1870's and in South Carolina in the 1880's.<sup>30</sup> The year 1880 has been set as "the beginning of cotton manufacturing development in the South."<sup>31</sup> "The general business revival of 1880 stimulated industry in all sections of the country."<sup>32</sup> The Atlanta and New Orleans Expositions, which were held in 1881 and 1884, also encouraged the construction of mills.<sup>33</sup>

The reasons most frequently given for the building of mills were these: it was necessary to give employment to poor white people, there was an abundance of cheap water power, the mills were close to the raw material, cheap labor was plentiful, it was desirable to develop the home market, the presence of the mills in the community would result in civic betterment, and it was necessary to compete with New England.<sup>34</sup> Later, town rivalry was a considerable stimulus to the erection of cotton factories.<sup>35</sup>

Particularly in the Carolinas did the campaign take on all the aspects of a religious revival. Industry was the South's salvation.<sup>36</sup> Philanthropy played no inconsiderable share in the thinking of the promoters, and the spirit of *noblesse oblige* characterized the early founders.<sup>37</sup> It was "not a business, but a social enterprise."<sup>38</sup> While the early mill owner wanted profits, there was a real humanitarianism in his attitude. "He did not consider a business profitable unless it could offer real advantages to those who worked in it and could contribute to the welfare of the community as a

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p. 299, 43, pp. 107-108. In December, 1873, the South Carolina legislature passed a bill to encourage manufacturing. *ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, p. 37 (footnote). <sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 40-62. <sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 44-46. <sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p. 97. <sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p. 86. <sup>29</sup> Clark in *ibid.*, p. 255. <sup>30</sup> Herring in *ibid.*, p. 10. <sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p. 59. <sup>32</sup> Clark in *ibid.*, p. 264. <sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 89. <sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 127-131, 175, p. 483, 189, p. 851. <sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21. <sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 154-159, Mitchell in *ibid.*, p. 22, 189, p. 350. <sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, p. 160, 178, pp. 249-250, 126, p. 221. <sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p. 221.

whole."<sup>39</sup> A good example of the spirit of the promoters was in evidence at Salisbury, North Carolina, where the Reverend Mr. Pearson, "a lean intense Tennessean, preached powerfully" that next to religion Salisbury needed a cotton mill to give employment to poor folks.<sup>40</sup> A plant was soon erected, and the mill is running today.<sup>41</sup> The same motive resulted in the building of mills at Clinton, South Carolina and at Raleigh, North Carolina.<sup>42</sup>

Many difficulties faced the early mill promoter. The poverty of the South, the craftiness of the commission men, and the ignorance of the operatives combined to make the problems most trying.<sup>43</sup> Under these conditions it was natural that the lawyers, the doctors, the schoolteachers, and the clergymen,<sup>44</sup> who ran the mills, felt that they were performing a great community service. Thus Judge Neale can say in *Number Thirty-Six*:

Sam [Hoover] doesn't think, he *knows*, that he is a philanthropist of the first order. He's building the town. He's putting Rogersville on the map, and if he were building a cathedral he couldn't be any more earnest and exalted about it. Suppose he is paying full-grown men only fifty cents a day? He'll tell you that that's fifty cents more than they would be getting if it weren't for his cotton mill, and I can't see where he is wrong.<sup>45</sup>

Writers have said that the Southern industrialist is a descendant of the plantation aristocrat,<sup>46</sup> but researches indicate that this belief is not based on facts. A study of three hundred cases in the East South by a Harvard graduate student shows that 80 per cent of the Southern mill men came from non-slaveholding parentage.<sup>47</sup>

The typical *entrepreneur*, as may be generalized from a few hundred random instances, was the son of a country merchant. Beginning as a clerk with perhaps a common-school education, he rose in time to storekeeper and petty money lender, laid by his profits and, with his savings, aided in starting a local factory or mine which he headed as president. When it is recalled how much of the leadership and financial strength

<sup>39</sup> Cited by 155, p. 40.      <sup>40</sup> 178, p. 249, 125, p. 21.

<sup>41</sup> In *Beyond Desire*, pp. 28-36, Sherwood Anderson pictures a revivalist preaching the need of a cotton mill in Langdon, Georgia. 3.

<sup>42</sup> 169, pp. 135-136.      <sup>43</sup> 178, p. 10.      <sup>44</sup> 169, p. 351; 162, pp. 101-106, 185, p. 22, 32, p. 5.      <sup>45</sup> 123, pp. 93-94.      <sup>46</sup> 169, pp. 102-103, 172, pp. 164-165, 173, pp. 106, 246-247.

<sup>47</sup> 227, p. 15 (footnote). Only 13 per cent of these mill men were born in the North. 227, p. 15 (footnote).

of the pre-war South was monopolized by the slavocracy, this change may be regarded as little short of revolutionary <sup>48</sup>

In the history of the cotton mill campaign, there are names which deserve special mention. H P Hammett, a native of Greenville, South Carolina, was the founder of the Piedmont mill which became the "kindergarten for the industry in the up-country for twenty years."<sup>49</sup> George A Gray, who was responsible for the beginning of the development of Gaston County, North Carolina, completed his mill in 1888 <sup>50</sup> D. A Tompkins, a native of Edgefield, South Carolina, and a cotton mill engineer of Charlotte, was more responsible than any one other person for the industrial development of the Piedmont Carolinas.<sup>51</sup> Deserving of special praise is F W. Dawson, editor of the *Charleston News and Courier*, who wrote and spoke of the importance of manufacturing. The editor of the *Manufacturers' Record*, also, popularized the South as a region of industrial opportunities <sup>52</sup> Other persons in the dramatic story are Captain E A Smyth, R C G Love, Daniel Rhyne, LeRoy Springs, George Makepeace, and the Fries, Patterson, Leak, and Holt families <sup>53</sup> These people were not trained for industrial control, but they "have shown that managing ability is not so rare as had been supposed."<sup>54</sup>

It is not strange that the feudalistic character of the plantation was transferred to the mill village. The mill manager looked upon the people who came to the village as his responsibility, just as the feudal lord felt bound to care for his serfs.<sup>55</sup> The workers often flocked to the village before the mill houses had been completed.

The mills provided everything, for they built industrial communities in open cotton fields, or cleared away forests to secure places by water power. Homes, stores, schools, churches—all were gifts of the management, for there was no other to give <sup>56</sup>

It was not a question of exploitation in the early mills; it was one of bread and meat. Poor white folks were given an opportunity to earn a living <sup>57</sup> Under the old system they had been

<sup>48</sup> 227, p. 15      <sup>49</sup> Cited by 169, p. 143, see also 178, pp. 70-72.      <sup>50</sup> 178, pp. 75-78.      <sup>51</sup> 167, p. 176 For a sketch of the life and work of Tompkins, see Winston, George Tayloe, *A Builder of the New South* 277

<sup>52</sup> 169, pp. 114-117, 178, pp. 74-75      <sup>53</sup> 169, pp. 101-110, 142-143      <sup>54</sup> 255, p. 302      <sup>55</sup> 178, pp. 246-249      <sup>56</sup> 178, p. 252, see also 178, p. 10 and 189, p. 351.      <sup>57</sup> 178, pp. 250-251

dispossessed. The cotton mills gave them an opportunity to re-enter "the life of the South."<sup>58</sup> The relations between worker and manager were most personal. Employee and employer were companions in a rather uncertain enterprise.<sup>59</sup>

The building of cotton mills in the late nineteenth century was largely the work of Southern men. Northerners rarely were helpful, and in some cases opposed Southern development.<sup>60</sup> Usually the building of a mill became a town affair.<sup>61</sup> Broadus Mitchell says that half of the South Carolina mills were community enterprises, others drew upon Charleston capital for their stimulation.<sup>62</sup>

The story of a mill usually ran thus. Some industrious citizen raised local capital, which was supplemented perhaps 40 to 50 per cent by the manufacturers of machinery and by Northern commission merchants. The machinery merchants severed their connection with the business as soon as the machines were paid for, the commission men have continued to play an important part in the cotton textile industry of the South.<sup>63</sup>

A number of factors militated against the early mill men, such as lack of capital, inexperienced management, gambling in cotton, and high rates of interest.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, profits from good mills were considerable. While competition was slight, mills run in almost any sort of way made money. Thus the building of factories continued.<sup>65</sup> In 1890 the South had 239 plants with a capitalization of \$53,821,303. By 1900 there were 401 mills, capitalized at \$124,596,874.<sup>66</sup>

The twentieth century saw the continued expansion of the industry. In the early 1900's, many weaving and fine goods mills were constructed. After the World War, there was a campaign for finishing plants and more diversified industries.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>58</sup> 169, p. 102      <sup>59</sup> 169, p. 188, 172, p. 165

<sup>60</sup> 169, pp. 82-83, 110-111. The most notable opponent of Southern mill building was Edward Atkinson of Boston. 169, pp. 117-120.

<sup>61</sup> The first chapters of Johnson, Gerald W., *Number Thirty-Six*, give a picture of this town interest in mill building. 123.

<sup>62</sup> 169, pp. 131, 267      <sup>63</sup> 169, pp. 242-254      <sup>64</sup> 169, pp. 261, 274-276.

<sup>65</sup> 169, pp. 262-266      <sup>66</sup> 169, p. 63      <sup>67</sup> Herring in 36, p. 10.

## Chapter Two

### THE COTTON MILL PEOPLE OF THE CAROLINAS

#### THE BACKGROUND OF THE OPERATIVES

THERE are three sources of the labor supply in Carolina cotton mills some of the workers come from the farms, some come from the mountains, and some have migrated from other mills <sup>1</sup> They are of Scotch-Irish and English ancestry, with some sprinkling of French and German Ninety-eight per cent of the people in the Piedmont are American-born and have lived in the vicinity for generations <sup>2</sup> Writers have called the mill workers "poor whites."<sup>3</sup>

. . . By the advent of manufactures, the Poor Whites were rescued from their precarious situation Penniless families trooped from the land to the mills with all their worldly goods in one wagon, "full of children and nothing else" <sup>4</sup>

But A. N. J. Den Hollander has recently concluded that the "poor white" legend has been overworked <sup>5</sup> He sees no reason for believing that any part of the white population of the South is inherently inferior to comparable groups in other sections of the country <sup>6</sup>

There seems to be little basis for the belief that the "poor whites" have inherited anything of either racial superiority or inferiority that a few generations of social guidance cannot counteract <sup>7</sup>

In his opinion a real yeomanry lived in the Piedmont <sup>8</sup> Ulrich Bonnell Phillips points out that class lines were not sharply drawn in the South before the Civil War.<sup>9</sup> There were frequent shiftings from planter to "poor white" and vice versa.<sup>10</sup> In ante-bellum North Carolina there were fewer of these poor white people than

<sup>1</sup> 218, p. 48    <sup>2</sup> 120, p. 36, 158, p. 256    <sup>3</sup> 178, p. 250, 175, p. 483, 224, p. 11, 95, p. 47, 97, p. 346    <sup>4</sup> 178, p. 104

<sup>5</sup> A definitive treatment of the "poor-whites" of the South is found in Den Hollander, A. N. J., *De Landelijke arme Blanken in het Zuiden der Vereenigde Staten* 62

<sup>6</sup> Den Hollander in 52, pp. 403-431    <sup>7</sup> Den Hollander in 52, p. 428    <sup>8</sup> Den Hollander in 52, pp. 403-431    <sup>9</sup> 208, pp. 33-34.    <sup>10</sup> 207, p. 346.



older writers have thought. And the mills got no more than their proportionate share of them.<sup>11</sup> Hundreds of the mill workers can qualify as Sons or Daughters of the American Revolution,<sup>12</sup> and they are "as good and as honest people as can be found in this country."<sup>13</sup> William P. Jacobs sees no difference between the ancestry of the owner and that of the operative.<sup>14</sup> Rupert B. Vance thinks of the mill hand as a commoner, "transplanted, it is likely, from the one-horse cotton farm."<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the economic servitude of the tenant system and the depression of Southern agriculture<sup>16</sup> made life on the farms almost unbearable during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

The condition of the hull people, especially, in the South of a generation ago was so pitiable that it is altogether beyond description.<sup>17</sup>

It is doubtful whether Anglo-Saxon people at any time since the Norman conquest had a lower standard of life than these. Nearly all were ignorant not only of letters, but of the elements of progressive, self-reliant existence.<sup>18</sup>

The first workers in the mills were densely ignorant.<sup>19</sup> They had to be taught the rudiments of sanitation and personal hygiene. The president of one of the South Carolina factories told Lois Macdonald that they "looked like sponges which had been completely squeezed out."<sup>20</sup>

The mountaineer, who forms the second stratum of mill population, is said to be a more desirable worker than the Piedmont farmer. He has greater capacity and is more efficient, but has a harder time in adapting himself to the steady labor of the mill.<sup>21</sup> A tall, lanky, clear-eyed individualist, this taciturn person socializes slowly.<sup>22</sup> The more adventurous mountain folk long ago moved westward with the early flow of population. Those who have come to the mills spring from the more conservative property owners and the tenant classes.<sup>23</sup> They are of nearly the same stock as the rest of the Southern whites, but have been isolated.<sup>24</sup> Life

<sup>11</sup> 100, p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> 264, pp. 110-111; 261, p. 210. The ancestor of a family now living in the Abbeville [S. C.] Cotton Mill village represented the district in Congress in the Ante-bellum Period.

<sup>13</sup> 141, p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> 120, p. 36.

<sup>15</sup> Vance in 48, p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> 175, p. 488.

<sup>17</sup> 185, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> 178, p. 18.

<sup>19</sup> 51, p. 40, 97, p. 340, 61, pp. 23-24.

<sup>20</sup> 155,

p. 10-20.

<sup>21</sup> 218, pp. 52-57; 223, p. 67.

<sup>22</sup> 218, p. 54; 34, pp. 90-91.

<sup>23</sup> 129,

p. 320.

<sup>24</sup> 268, pp. 244-245.

in the mountains had been as hard as, or harder than, that on the Piedmont farms. Certainly there was no great glory in it.<sup>25</sup> A crowded log cabin with few sanitary facilities did not make an appealing existence. Disease was rampant and mortality high. The people were so poor that they could not afford the inadequate medical service which was provided.<sup>26</sup> It is, therefore, not strange that

The wonders of our marvelous inventions promoting the comfort and pleasure of human beings are too much of a lure even for the isolated mountaineers of the South. Automobiles, radio, movies, and silk stockings thrill the hearts of the new generation of the mountains and the opportunity to join the mill villages is eagerly awaited by them.<sup>27</sup>

The third source of labor supply is other mill villages. Formerly it frequently happened that operatives from a neighboring mill came to take the place of overseer or section hand when a new mill was built. But with the present static condition of the industry, the mill village itself and the surrounding country are capable of supplying all the labor needed for most of the jobs in the industry.<sup>28</sup>

Studies of mill villages in and around Gastonia,<sup>29</sup> Charlotte,<sup>30</sup> and Carrboro,<sup>31</sup> North Carolina, and Greenville<sup>32</sup> and Whitmire,<sup>33</sup> South Carolina, show that the large majority of workers came from the immediate vicinity of the mill, usually from the county in which the mill is located and from the two or three surrounding counties.<sup>34</sup> The few who have come from outside the Carolinas were residents of Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. Most of the workers have come from farms. The parents of more than half of the Gaston County mill hands, who had come from farms, had been land owners, but the mill hands themselves were often tenants.<sup>35</sup> The mountaineer came late and is in the minority in the mill population.<sup>36</sup>

While most operatives had previously been farmers, many had worked in other mills, some had been in the army, others had been

<sup>25</sup> 155, pp. 286-307    <sup>26</sup> 34, pp. 195-198, 206, 211-216.    <sup>27</sup> 249, p. 331  
<sup>28</sup> 73, p. 73    <sup>29</sup> 223, p. 69, 224, p. 103    <sup>30</sup> 155, pp. 86, 121    <sup>31</sup> 243, chap.  
 11, p. 1    <sup>32</sup> 155, p. 45    <sup>33</sup> 16, p. 13    <sup>34</sup> Authorities in the field substantiate the findings of the study. 169, pp. 186-187, 191, 141, pp. 23-25, 254, pp. 109-110

<sup>35</sup> 223, pp. 71-72, 224, pp. 105-108, 221, p. 10    <sup>36</sup> 221, p. 5, 254, pp. 109-110

on public works, and a few had worked for the railroad <sup>37</sup> Jennings J. Rhyne shows that 125 mill families had considerable mobility on the farm <sup>38</sup> Joanna Farrell Sturdivant finds that the same was true of the Carrboro, North Carolina, mill workers <sup>39</sup>

The most general reason for coming to the mill is the better pay Others left the farm because of a desire for adventure, some deserted the country through the persuasion of relatives, and the destruction wrought by the boll weevil drove many to seek employment in the mill Better school advantages attracted a few <sup>40</sup> Not many who have come to the mill express a desire to leave.

#### THE PEOPLE ON THE HILL

There are probably 400,000 people in the cotton mill villages of the Carolinas <sup>41</sup> In 1927 the operatives in North Carolina numbered 95,786 <sup>42</sup> In South Carolina in 1925 there were 70,068 workers <sup>43</sup> Coming to the mill village has changed these people The routine labor and the weekly wage have replaced seasonal work and periodic incomes <sup>44</sup> The disjunction is so great that in some cases adjustment cannot be made Particularly does the mountaineer have a hard time adapting himself Horace Kephart says that he deteriorates like an Indian when he comes to the village. <sup>45</sup> The mill puts "the mark of the beast" on one <sup>46</sup> A sallow, underfed, sickly appearance is characteristic of mill people They always look tired <sup>47</sup> Frank Tannenbaum found them.

. . . like children, but rather strange, lost-looking, and bereaved. Their faces seem stripped, denuded, and empty They give the impression of being beyond the realm of things daily lived and experienced by other people or children: they exhibit little of the frolicsome and joyous, little of shouting and play Their faces are wan, and their eyes drawn and stupid. Unhappy children, if children at all. But really they are men and women who have been lost to the world and have forgotten its existence. <sup>48</sup>

Grace Lumpkin, who has been in many Carolina villages, says:

There were gaunt men and tired looking women, old before their time  
There were boys and girls, wan and stunted of the second and third

<sup>37</sup> 224, p. 108      <sup>38</sup> 223, p. 74      <sup>39</sup> 248, chap. III, pp. 1-2      <sup>40</sup> 223, pp. 74-75, 224, p. 108      <sup>41</sup> Estimated.      <sup>42</sup> Brown in 36, p. 138      <sup>43</sup> 240, p. 58  
<sup>44</sup> Vance in 48, p. 21      <sup>45</sup> 135, p. 305      <sup>46</sup> 153, p. 324      <sup>47</sup> 100, pp. 320-350, Otey in 36, p. 163, 2, p. 227      <sup>48</sup> 251, p. 206.

generation of those who had worked in the mills. They seemed about ten or twelve, but they were old enough to be looking at each other, thinking of marriage.<sup>49</sup>

Whether in Gastonia, Elzabethton, or Greenville, they look and act in almost the same way. They are tall and lean, not very articulate, and seem to have the patience of Job.<sup>50</sup>

The mill people are the most provincial of all the sectionally minded Southerners.<sup>51</sup> Leaders who have tried to organize the operatives attest to their opposition to people from the North. Their prejudice is directed not only against Yankees, but also against Catholics and Southern Europeans.<sup>52</sup> Paul Blanshard put it succinctly: "They are mutually suspicious of Yankees, foreigners and anybody who doesn't go to Sunday school."<sup>53</sup> And, of course, they hate the Negro, who is just below them socially.<sup>54</sup>

Primitive and ignorant people are ready to accept anything. Their credulity permits them to be deceived by Holy Rollers, Seventh Day Adventists, and other impressionistic religious sects.<sup>55</sup> Patent medicine dealers and demagogic politicians find them easy prey. And a mere report of higher wages at some neighboring mill is a sufficient excuse for packing up and moving.<sup>56</sup>

Forty-three out of forty-six competent observers believe that the mill workers do not think beyond their local environment.<sup>57</sup> A newspaper man says that during the strikes they were interested in what was happening elsewhere.<sup>58</sup> One of the abler organizers of the United Textile Workers sees evidence of their thinking beyond their own world.<sup>59</sup> Sherwood Anderson writes that they dream about, and have an ever-present consciousness of, the world outside the mill.<sup>60</sup> Another student thinks that they wonder about the world beyond the village.<sup>61</sup>

One of the most distressing features of their life is an apparent lack of interest in anything. Matters beyond food and lodging have little concern for them.<sup>62</sup> They look on improvement as hopeless and talk "with the genial or sullen docility of the defeated."<sup>63</sup> They appear to have accepted the inevitable; at least, they raise no particular objection to the system.<sup>64</sup> But why worry, at least, why worry much, when

<sup>49</sup> 153, p. 270    <sup>50</sup> 259, p. 8    <sup>51</sup> 192, p. 131    <sup>52</sup> 178, p. 182.    <sup>53</sup> 21,  
p. 51.    <sup>54</sup> 178, p. 182, 155, pp. 108, 72    <sup>55</sup> 213, p. 70, 10, pp. 4-5    <sup>56</sup> 224,  
pp. 132-133    <sup>57</sup> 218    <sup>58</sup> 181    <sup>59</sup> 204.    <sup>60</sup> 3, p. 69.    <sup>61</sup> 112    <sup>62</sup> 24,  
p. 144    <sup>63</sup> 21, p. 53.    <sup>64</sup> 24, p. 144

Round and round, over and over, mill hands' living was always the same. What did it all come to? Years of slaving and a pine coffin at the end.<sup>65</sup>

Yet there is something in the Southern people,

something deep and frightening at times, something which has grown out of suffering, something indigenous which might, if it were creatively released, provide the most potent stimulus for cultural advance since New England civilization disintegrated.<sup>66</sup>

#### THE MILL HOME

The average mill family consists of five or six members.<sup>67</sup> There are few exceptionally large families.<sup>68</sup> Low wages force all persons in a mill family to work, and the laboring of mothers causes a disrupted home.<sup>69</sup> Young children are left under the care of an older child or run loose about the village. Twenty-four out of forty competent judges do not believe that the mother's position has been improved by coming to the mill village. Her dominant place in the home is questioned. The same experts divide about equally on the question of the father's supremacy in family matters.<sup>70</sup> The fact that children are earning their own money causes the head of the home to lose much of his former control, the writers contend.<sup>71</sup>

Home in the mill village is hardly calculated to keep the child interested in fireside activities. It is evident that most families are indifferent to the care of the house.<sup>72</sup> Some rooms are almost bare. There is no sitting-room. The bedroom and the porch serve for courting, but workers usually do their "love-making" on the job.<sup>73</sup> On the walls of the rooms are hung enlarged photographs of members of the family and a calendar or so. Snuff boxes and patent medicine bottles take up the space on the mantel. A few books, usually including the Bible, and a sensational magazine may be found on a rickety table. Every room except the dining room and kitchen is a bedroom. In a few houses window curtains and embroidered pillow cases may add some touch of life to the

<sup>65</sup> 196, p. 176    <sup>66</sup> 151, p. 300.    <sup>67</sup> 16, p. 33, 108, p. 34, 39    <sup>68</sup> 223, p. 78  
<sup>69</sup> 189, p. 354, 279, pp. 52-53; 22, pp. 279-280    <sup>70</sup> 218    <sup>71</sup> 10, pp. 6-7 In the early days of the cotton textile industry, it was fairly common for old men to live on the wages of their children. This practice has disappeared. 180, 256, p. 109, 223, p. 85

<sup>72</sup> 224, p. 127    <sup>73</sup> 223, pp. 17-18

drabness of the sleeping chamber, but usually only the bare essentials are found <sup>74</sup> Thus it is not strange that mill women do not like housework <sup>75</sup> The fact that operatives want their children to get out of the system shows disapproval of life in the village.<sup>76</sup> But they wonder whether there is anything better

Maybe my children ought to get away from the mill village, but if they went anywhere they would go back to the farm and there ain't no use don' that The farmers havn't got it as good as we have.<sup>77</sup>

While some observers believe that the children are better off in the village than on the farm, parents think that "mill hill" is no place to raise children.<sup>78</sup>

#### SOCIAL LINES IN THE VILLAGE

Although the personal touch is strong in the Southern mill communities, the relationship between the owner and the worker is that of "Mr. Smith" and "John." A great gulf exists between the two, although they may have known each other from childhood. And the worker would be the last to step over the imaginary line <sup>79</sup> As the overseers move from the ranks of the workers<sup>80</sup> into a better house and a higher income, they adopt the philosophy of the capitalist class. While they may not regard themselves as very far above their former associates and are usually popular with the operatives, still the distinctions exist <sup>81</sup>

Among the workers themselves there are definite social groups <sup>82</sup> Some mills are notorious for their low class of people, and these are rated at the bottom in the social register of "mill hill." Similarly, certain sections and certain streets of a village are regarded as the resort of the worst elements <sup>83</sup> The chief basis for class

<sup>74</sup> 189, p. 353, Otey in 36, p. 165, 155, pp. 54-55, 223, pp. 16-17 <sup>75</sup> 89

<sup>76</sup> 155, pp. 78-79, 111, 137, 197, p. 27, 275 <sup>77</sup> 26, p. 581 <sup>78</sup> 223, pp. 198-199

<sup>79</sup> 213 In the summer of 1933, the daughter of the manager of a large Southern mill sent more engraved wedding invitations to mill people than to town people. The operatives took up a fifty-dollar free will offering as a wedding gift, but no worker attended the simple afternoon ceremony

<sup>80</sup> Of fifty-one superintendents and overseers studied by Jennings J. Rhynes, a large number had engaged in other work. Only 39.2 per cent had been in the mill all their lives. Forty-seven per cent had farmed. Those who began at the bottom usually entered the mill at an early age. 223, pp. 158-160

<sup>81</sup> 83; 114, 1, 218; 155, p. 136, 141, pp. 82-83

<sup>82</sup> 195, 100, pp. 320-350, Herring in 52, pp. 347-349, 153, p. 210, 2, p. 226,

<sup>83</sup> 215 There is not unanimous agreement on this point. Some managers and disinterested observers see no class lines in the villages <sup>84</sup> 195.

distinctions, as would be expected, is economic or positional. Educational, religious, and moral grounds come next <sup>84</sup>

#### INFERIORITY COMPLEX OF THE OPERATIVES

There is almost unanimity of opinion that the mill workers have an inferiority complex <sup>85</sup> Even the lowest tenant farmer ranks higher in the social scale than the "lint-head" <sup>86</sup> Moving to the village is usually regarded by the farmer or the mountaineer as a lowering of social status. Newcomers feel that they are a little above seasoned hands and below friends and relatives living on the farm <sup>87</sup> And hosiery, furniture, and cigarette workers, who have come from the same background as the cotton mill operatives, feel themselves distinctly superior <sup>88</sup>

The attitude of the town people has not been conducive to dispelling this feeling. They have stigmatized the cotton mill workers as "mill-ites" and "lint-tops" and have called their village "mill hill" <sup>89</sup>

There is a sense in which the mill hands of the South are not white men. They are "lint-heads." The mill village is not a village. It is a hill. It matters not how level the land on which it stands, it is on a hill <sup>90</sup>

Although the past decade or so has brought a change in the attitude toward mill people, <sup>91</sup> the inferiority complex remains. The reaction of the operatives is very definite. They feel that the "town dudes" are "stuck up," and they withdraw from any contact with them. Grace Lumpkin has put the feeling into a verse

The folks in town who dress so fine  
And spend their money free  
Will hardly look at a factory hand  
Who dresses like you and me <sup>92</sup>

Any observant Southerner can see the cleavage between town folks and mill people in social, religious, political, and economic relationships. It even shows itself in school. One of the chief reasons why mill children leave school when they reach the higher grades is that they are taunted by the town children or feel inferior to them, according to Wil Lou Gray. <sup>93</sup>

<sup>84</sup> 218, 195, 154, 275, 100, p. 148, Evans in 36, p. 160, 238, pp. 2-11.

<sup>85</sup> 229, pp. 195-196, 224, p. 27, 169, pp. 197-198, 175, p. 486, Otey in 36, p. 166, 155, pp. 74, 99, 21, pp. 60-61, 195

<sup>86</sup> 21, p. 60 <sup>87</sup> 112 <sup>88</sup> 144, 131 <sup>89</sup> 220 <sup>90</sup> 4, p. 5. <sup>91</sup> 97, p. 350, 178, p. 268, 127, p. 53, 75, p. 56 <sup>92</sup> 153, p. 200 <sup>93</sup> 89

## GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS AND INDIVIDUALISM OF THE WORKERS

In her latest statement Harriet L. Herring writes of two apparently paradoxical characteristics of the mill worker "He has been at once class conscious and individualistic with the weaknesses of each characteristic and the strength of neither."<sup>94</sup> Class consciousness does not mean working class consciousness, however.<sup>95</sup> ". . . Living in communities developed in these isolated country people something of a group consciousness."<sup>96</sup> Although the mill people, as is well known, are homogeneous ethnologically, linguistically, and religiously,<sup>97</sup> this class feeling comes from being separate from the rest of the community

Being just a mill hand, born one, was like being always a prisoner. You couldn't get out of knowing that. You were housed in, shut up. People, outside people, not mill hands, thought you were different. They looked down on you.<sup>98</sup>

Their aloofness and their clannishness are adequately attested. They are a peculiar people.<sup>99</sup> This is "the most characteristic form of segregation of an industrial group to be found anywhere in the country."<sup>100</sup> They marry among themselves and live and die among themselves.<sup>101</sup> "Once a mill worker, always a mill worker" is an accurate phrasing of this situation.<sup>102</sup>

Equally strong is the belief among the authorities that the mill workers are individualists.<sup>103</sup> Their Anglo-Saxon background, accentuated by the agricultural life of the South, has bred this feeling.<sup>104</sup> They have been described as

. . . a race of proud independent fighting people, descendants of as fine stock as is to be found in America . . . a class that is uneducated, but by no means either ignorant or unintelligent.<sup>105</sup>

W. J. Cash, a Carolina newspaper man, writes that the Southern worker's mind is steeped in the individualistic, laissez-faire phi-

<sup>94</sup> Herring in 52, p. 344    <sup>95</sup> 107, p. 21    <sup>96</sup> 171, p. 502    <sup>97</sup> 189, p. 356, 155, p. 18, 223, p. 5    <sup>98</sup> 3, p. 81

<sup>99</sup> 185, pp. 106, 124, 233, p. 25, 123, p. 226, 192, p. 251, 264, p. 98; 10, p. 15, 197, p. 39, 155, pp. 34, 37, 21, p. 62, 189, p. 355, 251, pp. 200-207, 212-213, 175, p. 486, 254, p. 199, 141, p. 26, Evans in 36, p. 160, 226, p. 828, 152, p. 20, 131.

<sup>100</sup> 224, p. 26    <sup>101</sup> 264, p. 98    <sup>102</sup> 251, p. 206

<sup>103</sup> 197, p. 39, 100, p. 23, Herring in 52, p. 350, 120, pp. 40-43, 155, p. 149, 51, p. 41, Brown in 36, p. 135, 175, p. 484, 216, 142, 154, 109, 114, 247    <sup>104</sup> Herring in 52, p. 350    <sup>105</sup> 129, p. 321.



losophy. He does not understand the present workings of industrialism, and he thinks of rising into the capitalistic class, not of improving the status of the textile operatives<sup>106</sup> "Legislature, press, pulpit, and platform" have done their share in bolstering the individualistic thinking of the workers<sup>107</sup> Co-operation has probably made less headway in the South than in any other part of the Union.

Group consciousness and individualism combined with a strong inferiority complex make strange bedfellows But they are certainly dominant characteristics of the Carolina mill operative.

#### MOVING FROM THE HILL

In June, 1923, Frank Tannenbaum infuriated the South by publishing an article in *The Century Magazine* entitled, "The South Buries Its Anglo-Saxons" He claimed that a segment of the Southern population had been forced into a certain groove, and he repeated a story told by a North Carolina college professor to the effect that during the preceding twenty years no person from a mill village had attained prominence even in his own county<sup>108</sup> What Sidney Lanier predicted had come to pass, according to Tannenbaum.

Look up the land, look down the land,  
The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand  
Wedge by the pressing of Trade's hand  
Against an inward-opening door  
That pressure tightens evermore.  
They sigh a monstrous foul-air sigh  
For the outside leagues of liberty,  
Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky  
Into a heavenly melody<sup>109</sup>

The village system was, of course, blamed for the condition It was pointed out that the ancestors of these people had produced something significant and that people coming from the same stock have been leaders<sup>110</sup> It is true that an operative rarely goes into

<sup>106</sup> 37, pp 187-190. Rising from the ranks has been common enough in the mills to justify such a conclusion Herring in 52, p 350

<sup>107</sup> 172, p. 167

<sup>108</sup> 251, pp 205-215 This article is one of the chapters in Tannenbaum, Frank, *Darker Phases of the South*, pp 39-73 250 Attacks on the cotton mill village had been made as early as 1891. 101, pp 119-120.

<sup>109</sup> 33, p 15

<sup>110</sup> 254, p 110, 251, p 210

another occupation. It is also a fact that he apparently does not want to.<sup>111</sup>

The belief that everyone who lives in the village must work in the mill has been the basis for the contention that mill children must follow the occupation of their parents. Such a notion is hardly correct. Most managers do not require all workers in a family which occupies a company house to work in the mills.<sup>112</sup> And there are some examples of owners who have helped boys and girls to move out of the mill circles into other occupations, but this attitude is not any too common.<sup>113</sup> Jennings J. Rhyne laments the fact that the small number of high school graduates limits the opportunity of mill children to go into other occupations.<sup>114</sup> However, the small amount of alternative employment in Southern towns makes it difficult even for high school graduates to move beyond the village. The only investigation<sup>115</sup> of this problem reveals that a boy's chances are nine to one that he will go into the mill and a girl's are ninety-nine to one. Although no sweeping conclusions can be drawn from this study, it does give one picture of the situation.

On the other hand, there are many examples of people who have risen from the village. William P. Jacobs says that bankers, mayors, legislators, merchants, and ministers have come from South Carolina mill villages.<sup>116</sup> One of the oldest mill communities in South Carolina has produced a number of men who have risen to positions of prominence in the government service, the professions, and business. A rear admiral of the United States Navy, a judge, and a number of prominent business men are among these.<sup>117</sup> Most of the high school graduates at Graniteville, South Carolina, a mill town, find employment outside the mill. Six or eight from each class usually attend college.<sup>118</sup> In 1926 eighteen families out of 178 in a Spartanburg, South Carolina, mill village were sending children to higher institutions of learning.<sup>119</sup> Teachers, bank clerks, and state senators have come from this community.<sup>120</sup> One mill boy has a master of arts degree from Clark University, and another got his training in the School of Commerce at Columbia University.<sup>121</sup> Governor Olin D. Johnston of South Carolina and Congressman John C. Taylor, representative for the

<sup>111</sup> *Id.*, p. 144.      <sup>112</sup> *Id.*, pp. 205-206, 214.      <sup>113</sup> *Id.*, pp. 63-64.      <sup>114</sup> *Id.*,  
p. 156.      <sup>115</sup> *Id.*, p. 58.      <sup>116</sup> *Id.*, p. 59.      <sup>117</sup> *Id.*, pp. 23-24.      <sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>119</sup> *Id.*, p. 66.      <sup>120</sup> *Id.*, pp. 98-101.      <sup>121</sup> *Id.*, p. 100.

third South Carolina District, came from mill villages. One of the ablest college presidents in the state worked in a South Carolina mill, and the dean of one of the state's colleges was formerly a mill operative.<sup>122</sup>

Rising in the industry itself has been quite common.<sup>123</sup> A notable figure in North Carolina textile history worked in the mill as a boy.<sup>124</sup>

Many have recognized and have demonstrated their powers of achievement in spite of marked educational handicaps, by rising to positions of prominence after starting as illiterate doffer boys.<sup>125</sup>

There are today in the South, especially in the cotton mills and hosiery factories, thousands of men who have come up the ranks from sweeper boys to foremen or superintendents, or even general manager and chief owner.<sup>126</sup>

Piedmont, one of the oldest mill towns in South Carolina, "was the nursery of the Industrial Revolution in the South. In a quarter of a century it sent out 40 superintendents to manage half a million spindles."<sup>127</sup> It thus appears that Frank Tannenbaum was unduly critical.

#### LEADERSHIP IN THE VILLAGE

Generally speaking, there is little leadership on "mill hill." Even in excellent Parker School District, Greenville, South Carolina, the teachers manage the parents' association, and directors guide the welfare work.<sup>128</sup> The people have had everything done for them too long. Frank Tannenbaum gives an extreme but revealing picture when he quotes:

You know my people have everything they need. Two years ago I decided that they ought to have some flowers. Flowers are good for them. I got me a man to plow up the piece of land in front of each house. . . . My people know nothing of flowers, so I got me a gardener to buy some seeds for them. You know it would never do for them to be jealous of each other. So he bought the same kind of seeds for each garden and planted them all in similar rows. The flowers looked very pretty. But you know they are careless and just like children, so we had to tell them not to pull the flowers out.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>122</sup> 181    <sup>123</sup> 109, 100, p. 324    <sup>124</sup> 172, p. 164    <sup>125</sup> 223, p. 195    <sup>126</sup> Her-  
ing in 52, p. 350    <sup>127</sup> 178, p. 78    <sup>128</sup> 155, pp. 63-65, 98.    <sup>129</sup> 251, p. 212

Here and there a few cotton mill people express themselves in their own way. They give community suppers, church socials, and entertainments, but usually under mill direction.<sup>130</sup> Marjorie A. Potwin believes that they have an ample opportunity to manage things and do manage them.<sup>131</sup> But most observers say that mill people do not appear to be able to handle co-operative enterprises.<sup>132</sup>

#### THE WAGES OF THE OPERATIVES

The low incomes of Southern cotton mill operatives have constituted one of the focal points in the various discussions regarding the industry. The matter of deciding the income of the worker is complicated by the wages in kind and by the rebates given on various commodities purchased.<sup>133</sup> Real wages have always been low in the South. Clarence Heer has shown that this is a region of low incomes in all industries.<sup>134</sup>

Wage scales in the cotton mills have been below the national average for years. In 1850 the yearly compensation was about \$116. In 1856 a traveller reported that adult cotton mill workers were earning wages of from \$8 to \$12 a month in the South. In the 1880's South Carolina boasted of paying an average of \$14.60 a month to workers in the mills.<sup>135</sup> The twentieth century brought some improvement in this condition, but the 1927 wages in Southern mills were only 66 per cent of those in the leading New England states and Pennsylvania.<sup>136</sup> Clarence Heer found in 1928 that the Southern figures ranged from 61 per cent to 78 per cent of the corresponding Northern wages.<sup>137</sup>

The fact that the mill worker receives a higher income than the farmer<sup>138</sup> has been an important consideration in the operative's low wage. Many of the leading manufacturers of the Carolinas justify their low wage scales on this ground and see no possibility of improving the situation until agriculture becomes more profitable.<sup>139</sup>

Some data have been collected, and a number of small studies of the wages of Southern mill workers have been made. The figures vary considerably because different years were selected for

<sup>130</sup> 97, p. 348. <sup>131</sup> 215. <sup>132</sup> 218. <sup>133</sup> Potwin in 116, p. 58. <sup>134</sup> 96, pp. 52-54. <sup>135</sup> 169, pp. 222-227. <sup>136</sup> Mitchell in 58, p. 85. <sup>137</sup> 96, p. 37. <sup>138</sup> 221, p. 13, 96, pp. 64-65, 223, pp. 99-104. <sup>139</sup> Evans in 36, p. 162, 82, pp. 5-8, Geer in 116, p. 32, 85, p. 1192, 264, p. 127.

study and because unlike units of measurements were chosen. After including a liberal allowance for the special services and privileges which come with the village system,<sup>140</sup> an unbiased investigator concludes that the Southern worker receives a lower income than his Northern brother.<sup>141</sup>

The most reliable figures for 1930 show that the cotton mill workers of North Carolina received average actual earnings of \$12.68 per week,<sup>142</sup> while those of Massachusetts got \$16.84 for about the same working period. At the same time the South Carolina worker was getting \$11.43, while the Rhode Island operative, with a slightly longer actual working week, was receiving \$17.74.<sup>143</sup> Against these figures must be put certain wages in kind.

Throughout the Carolinas the mill owner charges about twenty-five cents a room per week for a house.<sup>144</sup> The percentage of capital invested in the mill village houses has been variously estimated at from one-sixth to one-third of the total outlay.<sup>145</sup>

The cotton mill village is a tremendous financial drain upon the manufacturer. [and it is] not . . . a mill stone around the operative's neck, but . . . one of his greatest fortunes.<sup>146</sup>

William P. Jacobs says that the cost of permanent equipment, not counting real estate, in the mill villages of South Carolina is about \$18,103,000.00. And the yearly maintenance cost is \$1,460,479.24.<sup>147</sup> Ralph Carsbol Barbare estimates that the rent from the Brandon Mill houses amounts to about 4 per cent on the investment plus the cost of water and lights.<sup>148</sup> From some

<sup>140</sup> Murchison in 36, p. 33, 178, p. 18, 23, p. 115, 230, p. 337, 17, p. 73.

<sup>141</sup> "The Southern cotton-mill workers are the poorest paid manufacturing workers in America," 23, p. 114.

<sup>142</sup> A study of eighty cotton mills in the state shows the average for the fall of 1932 to be \$11.08. 80.

<sup>143</sup> 207, p. 36. When the wage scales of New England workers are compared with those of Southern workers, it must be remembered that the Southerner is working, as a rule, on lower priced, coarser goods, and that his wages naturally should be lower. 183, pp. 17-18.

<sup>144</sup> Cone in 259, p. 308, 13, p. 77, 120, p. 187, 108, p. 37, 223, p. 102, 150, pp. 148-151. During shut-downs the mills usually allow workers to occupy houses rent free. 100, p. 234.

<sup>145</sup> 97, p. 350, 100, p. 246, 224, p. 26. <sup>146</sup> 120, p. 176.

<sup>147</sup> 120, p. 175. The estimates of William P. Jacobs have a constant error because he assumes that all the South Carolina mills spent in the same proportion as the fifty-nine which replied to his questionnaire. <sup>148</sup> 13, p. 79.

dozen sources, Harriet L. Herring found annual subsidies per mill house to range from \$51.28 to \$218. Her figures give an average around \$113.<sup>149</sup>

Water and lights are usually free of charge with house rent. Fifty-five per cent of the South Carolina mills supply fuel at cost, and 35 per cent at reduced rates.<sup>150</sup> This practice is likewise common in North Carolina.<sup>151</sup> Garden spots, seed, flower plots, medical aid,<sup>152</sup> pastures, and garages are added by many mills free of charge.<sup>153</sup> In addition to these, many other welfare agencies are supported by the mills.<sup>154</sup>

The monetary value of all these services has been estimated by a number of experts. The American Cotton Manufacturers' Association arrived at the conclusion that the worker's rent gratuity varied from \$1.50 to \$4.36 per week.<sup>155</sup> This latter figure, generally known to be the estimate for Cramerton, North Carolina, one of the better villages, has been circulated as the figure for all Southern mills.<sup>156</sup> Bernard Cone, a leading manufacturer of Greensboro, North Carolina, puts the amount at \$2.50 for his rather up-to-date villages and believes that the figure for the state would range from \$1.50 to \$2.00.<sup>157</sup> Main and Gunby, industrial engineers, say that the village philanthropy is \$1.13 per spindle per year. This would amount to \$1.54 per worker per week.<sup>158</sup>

Low wages are the chief manufacturing advantage of the Southern mill men. Paul Blanshard stated before the Senate Committee which investigated the textile industry that the Southern manufacturing differential was 14 per cent.<sup>159</sup> In a recent study, Ben F. Lemert asserts that it costs 2.79 cents per yard less to manufacture No. 20 sheetings in the Piedmont than in New England.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>149</sup> 100, pp. 237-244. <sup>150</sup> 120, p. 188. William P. Jacobs says that four-fifths of the South Carolina mills supply the operatives with running water and lights free of charge. 120, p. 187. <sup>151</sup> 100, p. 209; 178, p. 263.

<sup>152</sup> In good times it was common for mills to carry group insurance for the workers. 100, pp. 177-181, 155, p. 44, 17, pp. 113-114.

<sup>153</sup> 219; 13, p. 84, 175, pp. 465-486.

<sup>154</sup> In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the Northern worker gets many of these benefits as part of the social welfare program of the local and state governments. <sup>155</sup> 183, p. 38, 108, p. 40.

<sup>156</sup> 223, p. 102. Paul Blanshard apparently misread the figure "\$3.46," in testifying before the Senate committee. 279, p. 147.

<sup>157</sup> Cited by Murchison in 36, pp. 33-34. <sup>158</sup> 21, p. 35. <sup>159</sup> 279, pp. 149-150. <sup>160</sup> 146, p. 174.

Balancing the books is no easy task, but it appears that Southern mill wages have been much too low in the past.

## COST OF LIVING IN THE SOUTH

As a partial offset for the wage differential, the Southern mill man has contended that the cost of living is lower in the South than in the North. The critics of the industry have replied by repeating the much publicized statistics gathered by the National Industrial Conference Board in 1920, and later corrected to 1928. The figures, which are reproduced in the table below, are set as a minimum standard for a man with a wife and three children under fourteen years of age.<sup>161</sup>

<i>City</i>	<i>Yearly Cost of Living</i>	
	<i>1920</i>	<i>1928</i>
Fall River, Massachusetts	\$1267 76	\$1081.80
Lawrence, Massachusetts	1385 78	1182.05
Greenville, South Carolina	1393 60	1188.66
Pelzer, South Carolina	1374 00	1172 10
Charlotte, North Carolina	1438 03	1227 49

Other studies disagree with the findings of the National Industrial Conference Board. Thirty-four foods used by textile workers were priced in Fall River and Winston-Salem on the same day in 1928. The Fall River prices were 6.3 per cent higher.<sup>162</sup> Abraham Berglund, and others, found the cost of most food items to be about the same in the two regions in 1928-1929. Meats were higher in New England.<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, Ben F. Lemert says that foods are considerably cheaper in the South than in New England.<sup>164</sup> Margaret Scattergood reports lower fuel costs, which agree with the figures of Ben F. Lemert.<sup>165</sup> The Southerner's clothing bill is less than the New Englander's, for he wears fewer garments and many of these are cotton. The men commonly wear overalls and blue shirts, the women have gingham slips or percale dresses. Calico and lawn are also used as materials for women's clothes.<sup>166</sup> Although adults are comfortably clothed, there is nothing stylish or attractive about their wearing apparel.<sup>167</sup> The younger workers, especially the girls, spend more money on flashy clothes.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Cited by 65, pp. 112-113, 178, p. 15      <sup>162</sup> 226, p. 827      <sup>163</sup> 17, p. 127

<sup>164</sup> 146, pp. 66-67      <sup>165</sup> 226, p. 827, 146, pp. 99-102      <sup>166</sup> 146, p. 68; 223, p. 103, 197, pp. 65-66      <sup>167</sup> 108, p. 46, 155, p. 54      <sup>168</sup> 223, p. 15.

From the rather inadequate research at hand, it appears likely that the cost of living is somewhat lower in the South than in New England

#### DIET OF THE OPERATIVES

It is a widely known fact that the common man in the South lives on "hog and hominy." The mill worker eats pork, fat-back bacon, hominy, turnip greens, collards, cabbage, corn bread, large baking powder biscuits, canned goods, and molasses.<sup>160</sup> Meats and fried foods appear in the worker's diet much too frequently.<sup>170</sup> When vegetables are served, they are poorly prepared.<sup>171</sup> The meals are usually cooked hastily by those incapable of working in the mill or by the mother, who leaves the mill before the noon recess.<sup>172</sup> A few typical daily menus give some idea of the items in the operative's meals.

Breakfast	fat back, biscuit, syrup, eggs once in a while,
Dinner	cabbage and cow peas with corn bread.
Supper	left-overs <sup>173</sup>
Breakfast	hominy grits, biscuit, coffee.
Dinner	beans and one other vegetable cooked with fat back
Supper	left-overs <sup>174</sup>

Although the mill workers spend on food about half of their incomes—much of which goes for Coca Cola, crackers, and candies—still they do not get many needed essentials.<sup>175</sup> With such a poorly balanced diet, it is not strange that there are 20,000 cases of pellagra in North Carolina mill villages.<sup>176</sup>

#### DISORDER AND CRIME AMONG THE WORKERS

Available facts do not show the mill worker to be any more disorderly than the average Southern worker. Over a period of three years, the mill operative committed proportionately fewer crimes which came before the superior courts of North Carolina than the rest of the population of the State.<sup>177</sup> An examination of the charts and statistical tables in H. C. Brearley, *Homicide*

<sup>160</sup> Otey in 36, p. 165, 223, p. 16, 189, p. 353, 108, p. 45, 155, pp. 93-94, 148, p. 19, 245, pp. 1091-1093, 89.

<sup>170</sup> 189, p. 353. <sup>171</sup> 108, p. 45. <sup>172</sup> 189, p. 353. <sup>173</sup> 245, p. 1100. <sup>174</sup> 245, p. 1091. <sup>175</sup> 245, p. 1093, Otey in 36, p. 165. <sup>176</sup> 65, p. 149. <sup>177</sup> 213, pp. 102-103, 223, p. 184.



in the United States,<sup>178</sup> shows that the great cotton mill towns and counties of South Carolina have a lower homicide rate than the non-industrial communities of the state. Although there are no authoritative data on lynching by mill workers, Marjorie A. Potwin says that no Negro has ever been lynched in a Spartanburg mill community.<sup>179</sup>

Under the paternalistic system not much blatant immorality escapes the eagle eye of the mill owner or manager. Persons guilty of sexual irregularities are expelled from the villages.<sup>180</sup> Although adultery is not uncommon, mill people as a class are not immoral.<sup>181</sup> Lately there has been a great improvement in village morality, but there are still many loose girls on "the hill."

In Gaston County the rate of illegitimacy among cotton mill girls and women is about the same as among the other white population.<sup>182</sup> Similarly, the cotton mill population seems to furnish no more than its share of the feeble-minded and insane.<sup>183</sup> But the poorhouse has more than its quota of former cotton mill hands.<sup>184</sup> Mill boys and girls are about twice as delinquent as other white people, if we judge by the number of inmates in state institutions.<sup>185</sup> It appears that boy gangs are common in the villages and are productive of much petty crime.<sup>186</sup> Desertion and separation are common, according to Paul Blanchard.<sup>187</sup> Since the South Carolina statutes do not permit legal divorce, separation is the usual resort of couples who disagree.<sup>188</sup>

#### MOBILITY AND LOST TIME OF THE OPERATIVES

From a social point of view, mobility is one of the worst features of village life. It varies rather widely from place to place and from family to family.<sup>189</sup> The village system, dissatisfaction with work, low wages, and desire for adventure are the chief causes for change of residence.<sup>190</sup> Lois Macdonald says that the turnover in help is 211 per cent in one South Carolina mill village.<sup>191</sup> The government study, *Lost Time and Labor Turnover in Cotton Mills*,<sup>192</sup> gives figures of 189.5 per cent for Southern as against

<sup>178</sup> 30, pp 214-215, 216-219, 228-230    <sup>179</sup> 106, 213, p 111    <sup>180</sup> 213, pp 105, 108    <sup>181</sup> 141, p 177, 196, p 23    <sup>182</sup> 223, pp 187-188    <sup>183</sup> 223, pp 188-190    <sup>184</sup> 223, p 191    <sup>185</sup> 223, pp 180-181    <sup>186</sup> 223, pp 183-184, 213, p 104    <sup>187</sup> 21, p 59    Jennings J Rhyne disagrees with this position    <sup>188</sup> 223, p 191-192    <sup>189</sup> 21, p 59    <sup>190</sup> 155, p 43, 223, pp 109-111, 113    <sup>191</sup> 223, p 113, 224, pp 108, 148, 233, p 5, 189, p 356, 152, pp 17-18    <sup>192</sup> 155, p 48  
<sup>192</sup> 152, p. 17

94.9 per cent for Northern plants.<sup>193</sup> The Southern mill worker glories in his God-given right to change jobs and exercises it whenever the notion strikes him. T. M. Young writes that a man in South Carolina had worked in fifty-six cotton mills.<sup>194</sup> About one-fourth of the families do most of the moving.<sup>195</sup> These "floaters" comprise the lowest strata of mill population and give the mill village its bad name.<sup>196</sup>

A number of statistical charts of cotton mill mobility have been made. Jennings J. Rhyne's detailed analysis of mill life shows that 21.6 per cent of the Gaston County, North Carolina, families moved once a year.<sup>197</sup> Bertha Carl Hipp says that 22 per cent had lived less than two years in Smyre Village, Gaston County.<sup>198</sup> Lois Macdonald figures that 55 per cent had been less than two years in three Carolina cotton mill villages.<sup>199</sup> An investigation of five Carolina villages by Myra Page shows that 58 per cent had lived four years or less in one place.<sup>200</sup> One of the highest yearly rates of mobility, recorded as 48.1 per cent, is found at Whitmire, South Carolina.<sup>201</sup> This migrating spirit appears to be in the people's bones. One family reports that although they have lived in a village for twelve years, they may move at any moment.<sup>202</sup> There is another statement to the effect that the mills would feel that they owned the worker if he remained in one place too long.<sup>203</sup> One mill official believes that moving is beneficial, because it satisfies the worker's desire for adventure.<sup>204</sup> And Paul Blanshard sees the right to move as among the most important of the worker's few privileges.<sup>205</sup> However, mobility is accompanied by other traits, clearly unsocial. Many of the mill families slip away without paying debts.<sup>206</sup> Jeannette Paddock Nichols believes that mill operatives are an irresponsible group of people and that mobility is partly the cause of their irresponsibility.<sup>207</sup>

The worker goes to his job or not, as the feeling strikes him. Some mills have spare hands amounting to a fifth of the labor supply.<sup>208</sup> The lost time in Southern factories is almost twice

<sup>193</sup> Paul Blanshard uses the same figures *24*, p. 148. <sup>194</sup> *280*, p. 74. <sup>195</sup> *100*, p. 22. Broadus Mitchell thinks that they are from 10 to 30 per cent of the people *175*, p. 487. <sup>196</sup> *213*, p. 72, *223*, p. 49. <sup>197</sup> *223*, pp. 106-107. <sup>198</sup> *108*, p. 48. <sup>199</sup> *155*, pp. 48-49, 89, 124. <sup>200</sup> *197*, p. 59. <sup>201</sup> *16*, pp. 10-11, *202* *16*, p. 12. <sup>203</sup> *155*, p. 49. <sup>204</sup> *224*, pp. 120-121. <sup>205</sup> *21*, p. 48. <sup>206</sup> *223*, pp. 207-208, *213*, p. 118, *108*, pp. 43-44. <sup>207</sup> *189*, p. 357. <sup>208</sup> *213*, pp. 148-149, *141*, p. 61. A spare hand is an employee who works when a regular operative is absent.

that in Northern plants <sup>209</sup> As would be expected, women lose much more time than men <sup>210</sup> Few holidays, a depressing climate, and the spare-hand system are the reasons given for the great amount of lost time in Southern plants <sup>211</sup>

## SOCIAL LIFE OF THE MILL WORKERS

The social life of the mill worker is developed largely in cotton mill circles. The church, the school, and the community program may help somewhat, but the operative is usually an introvert <sup>212</sup> He may discuss county politics on a dry goods box, go fishing in his Ford, see a picture show, or just "set." He usually "sets" <sup>213</sup>

Lodges interest the male mill worker, and competent judges believe that he tends to join secret orders more frequently than the average Southerner <sup>214</sup> The most common orders in the village are Woodmen of the World, Red Men, Odd Fellows, Masons, and Junior Order of American Mechanics <sup>215</sup> Women are interested in the sister organizations of the men's lodges <sup>216</sup>

In the very nature of things, the mill worker has little voice in running his community, <sup>217</sup> but he does play a considerable rôle in county and state politics. This is particularly true in South Carolina, where he can control some county elections and often come near to determining state elections <sup>218</sup> Jennings J. Rhyne finds that the Gaston mill worker votes about as often as the average Southerner <sup>219</sup> Joanna Farrell Sturdivant reports similar facts for Carrboro, North Carolina <sup>220</sup> Rarely does a mill worker hold office, <sup>221</sup> but a number have risen into the law and gone to the legislature in South Carolina.

Interest in music is common on "mill hill." Two-fifths of five hundred Gaston County mill families have musical instruments <sup>222</sup> About 60 per cent of the families in Saxon Village, Spartanburg, South Carolina, have either a piano, a victrola, or a radio. <sup>223</sup> In Whitmire, South Carolina, 40 per cent of the people have musical instruments. Religious music is frequently heard in the village,

<sup>209</sup> 152, p. 15      <sup>210</sup> *Ibid*      <sup>211</sup> 152, pp. 42-48      <sup>212</sup> 223, pp. 175-176  
<sup>213</sup> 223, p. 18

<sup>214</sup> 223, p. 177, 155, pp. 66-68, 76, 213, p. 126, 224, p. 160, 141, p. 150. Jennings J. Rhyne found that one-fourth of the male heads of families in Gaston County, North Carolina, mill villages were members of one or more secret orders. 223, p. 176

<sup>215</sup> 223, p. 177, 213, p. 126, 155, pp. 66-68      <sup>216</sup> 155, pp. 68-69      <sup>217</sup> 155, p. 32      <sup>218</sup> 121; 213, pp. 98-100, 215      <sup>219</sup> 223, p. 178      <sup>220</sup> 248, chap. iii, p. 6.      <sup>221</sup> 224, p. 161      <sup>222</sup> 97, p. 348, 223, p. 137      <sup>223</sup> 213, p. 66

and the organ is not uncommonly found <sup>224</sup> Victrolas, organs, pianos, and radios rank in the order mentioned <sup>225</sup>

The mill worker reads more than would be expected. Alexander Ramsay Batchelor reports that half of the families in Whitmire, South Carolina, saw daily newspapers <sup>226</sup> E R Rankin, also, says that there is considerable reading of local papers in Gaston County, North Carolina <sup>227</sup> About 80 per cent of the families in Saxon Village subscribed to a daily newspaper in 1927 <sup>228</sup> Operatives in the better mill villages "take a daily newspaper and read it as much as the average Main streeter."<sup>229</sup> The magazines read are rarely of the current opinion type True stories and western romances are the chief types of magazines purchased The cheap, sensational newspaper is frequently read <sup>230</sup> Libraries are not common, and, when found, they are poor and little used The exception is the "Library on Wheels" in Greenville, South Carolina The adults living in one village which is served by this institution withdrew, in 1925, an average of ninety-four books per month <sup>231</sup>

Much of the leisure time of the worker is spent in an old Ford About 40 per cent of the families in Smyre Village, Gaston County, North Carolina, had cars in 1930 <sup>232</sup> A J Ligon testified before the Senate Committee which investigated Southern textiles that 325 families in one of his South Carolina villages had between 125 and 150 cars <sup>233</sup> About 30 per cent of the people in Whitmire operate cars <sup>234</sup>

Other recreational activities of the mill worker are hunting, fishing, and attending the picture show. Cheap love films and dashing western movies are quite popular <sup>235</sup>

#### VALUE OF THE MILL

Many writers think that the cotton mills "are the special line of ascent of the people of the South."<sup>236</sup> They are a great missionary agent which has done more for the general uplift of the people than all the churches combined <sup>237</sup> Most of the social gains recently made in the South have been associated with the

<sup>224</sup> 16, p. 41      <sup>225</sup> *Ibid*; 213, p. 66, 223, pp. 136-138      <sup>226</sup> 16, p. 42  
<sup>227</sup> 221, p. 19.      <sup>228</sup> 213, p. 68      <sup>229</sup> 103, p. 8      <sup>230</sup> 223, pp. 13, 175, 213, p. 69, 155, p. 106; 123      <sup>231</sup> 155, p. 65, 219      <sup>232</sup> 108, p. 46      <sup>233</sup> 279, p. 135  
<sup>234</sup> 16, p. 42.      <sup>235</sup> 223, pp. 16, 174, 224, p. 159, 221, pp. 18-19      <sup>236</sup> Cited by 97, p. 349      <sup>237</sup> 9, p. 225

rise of the cotton textile industry<sup>238</sup> One minister, now a college president, reaches peaks of typical Southern oratory in describing the service of the mills

Southern industry is a moral venture It is an adventure in the realm of human possibility It is the venture of seeing the potential worth of men The pioneers of Southern industry were pioneers of God They were prophets of God doing what God wanted done Southern industry is a divine institution When the first whistles blew people flocked to the light from barren places There cotton mills were established that people might find themselves and be found It is a spiritual movement<sup>239</sup>

There is common agreement that coming to the mills has improved the economic status of the workers<sup>240</sup> "Generally, those who went to the mills were better fed, housed and clothed than ever in their lives before."<sup>241</sup> They get definite cash wages and are freed from agricultural serfdom And those who bemoan the operative's loss of identification with social, political, and religious bodies err in thinking that he had any strong affiliation with these agencies on the farm<sup>242</sup> Frank Tannenbaum apparently does not realize that the tenant farmer and mountaineer never had "the freedom, . . . interest in the world, [and] knowledge of it" whose loss he laments.<sup>243</sup> While some workers may be tired of living under a paternalism, the average operative prefers the mill to the farm And generally, the people do not see anything better in the world about them<sup>244</sup>

<sup>238</sup> *JS*, p. 187      <sup>239</sup> *ISS*, p. 17      <sup>240</sup> Vance in *JS*, pp. 17-19, *ISS*, pp. 35-36, 178, pp. 100, 266-267, 221, p. 30, 189, p. 353, 182, p. 1231, 251, p. 213, Evans in *SS*, p. 160

<sup>241</sup> *ISS*, p. 100      <sup>242</sup> Evans in *SS*, pp. 159-160      <sup>243</sup> 251, p. 213      <sup>244</sup> 270, p. 253.

## Chapter Three

### THE CAROLINA COTTON MILL VILLAGES

#### TYPES OF VILLAGES

THERE are four types of cotton mill villages in the Carolinas: the cotton mill town, the company or unincorporated mill town, the suburban mill village, and the rural mill village.<sup>1</sup>

The cotton mill town is dependent upon cotton manufacturing for its existence. It is usually incorporated and run independently of the mills. A few well-to-do people, a considerable number of tradesfolk, a sprinkling of mechanics, carpenters, and the like, and the cotton mill operatives live in such a community. A number of the mill people own their homes, but the large majority live in the village which surrounds the mill.<sup>2</sup>

The company town—there are only a few villages of this type—is owned and more or less controlled by the corporation.<sup>3</sup> In such a community, the mill men have frequently improved the roads, landscaped the yards and parks, and varied the housing design. Some of the villages are most attractive. But the social, religious, and educational life of the town is led and more or less dominated by the owners. However, the operatives order their private lives about as they choose.<sup>4</sup>

Located on the edge of a large town or small city is the suburban mill village, the most usual type of mill community in the Carolinas. It is sufficient unto itself and the village people do not usually mingle in the life of the town. The village may or may not be within the corporate limits,<sup>5</sup> but it has its own stores, meat markets, barber shops, pool rooms, and so on. In many

<sup>1</sup> 98, p. 853, 228, p. 5      <sup>2</sup> 228, pp. 43-53

<sup>3</sup> Usually, a deputy sheriff, appointed by the county and paid by the mill, keeps the peace in these villages. 18, p. 86, 175, p. 485

<sup>4</sup> 228, pp. 60-64.

<sup>5</sup> If the village is a part of the city, a special policeman is usually assigned, if the village is unincorporated, a deputy sheriff, paid by the company, sees that law and order prevail. 18, p. 86, 100, pp. 195-198

instances the plant is large, and the village often has a thriving welfare program <sup>6</sup>

The rural mill village is the most isolated. Less common than in the early days, it is inhabited by people who rate lowest on cultural indices. They are illiterate, shiftless, and bucolic. Stores may be run by the company, and a mission church is likely to be found. Social life in such a village is almost non-existent <sup>7</sup>

#### THE OLD VILLAGE

While there are four types of cotton mill communities, a person visiting the Carolinas for the first time may go from Danville, Virginia, southward, passing through Roxboro, Durham, Sanford, Rockingham, Cheraw, Camden, and Columbia, turning north to Newberry, Greenwood, Anderson, Greenville, Spartanburg, Gaffney, Gastonia, Charlotte, Concord, Kannapolis, Salisbury, High Point, and Greensboro, and back to Danville again, without missing a village on the route. Moreover, although there are major and minor differences in cotton mill communities, they look and are somewhat alike <sup>8</sup>

When the first villages were built, there was little thought of beauty. Underprivileged folk were being given the chance to earn a living. Almost any kind of shack was better than the hovel on the farm or the mountain. Consequently the older houses, many of which remain, are drab, ugly, and comfortless. These boxlike structures are usually lined up in military rows like so many soldiers at attention <sup>9</sup>. When they are painted, they are all painted alike <sup>10</sup>. Little care was taken in selecting the site for the mill and its village <sup>11</sup>. Very frequently the houses were built on barren hillsides, their location prompted an English traveler to say that they had "legs like a kangaroo's" and looked like "a village on stilts" <sup>12</sup>. Here and there a shade tree breaks the monotony of the red clay streets. In some yards one sees vegetable and flower gardens, but generally there is only the bare ground <sup>13</sup>. A few dingy churches and dilapidated stores add to the general appearance of decay. These early mill villages present a dismal but true picture of the living conditions of people of some of the best stock in the South <sup>14</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 223, pp 54-59

<sup>7</sup> 223, pp 37-42.

<sup>8</sup> 223, p 5

<sup>9</sup> 155, p 24, 97, p 347

<sup>10</sup> 97, p 347

<sup>11</sup> 223, pp 21-22

<sup>12</sup> 280, p 59

<sup>13</sup> 155, p 126; 264, p 59.

<sup>14</sup> 87, p 347

## THE MODEL COMMUNITY

The prosperity of the cotton textile industry has not completely obliterated the early survivals of poverty and shortsightedness, but many changes have been made "Mill hill" still looks "like a hen with chickens that have come out of the same setting, all of one size"<sup>15</sup> But the chickens now are prettier than they used to be, and the surroundings are more attractive.

As early as 1902, Thomas F. Parker, a mill pioneer of Greenville, South Carolina, was anxious to improve the appearance of mill villages.<sup>16</sup> His efforts have resulted in some notable changes

For lawns, and beautiful shrubs, and well-kept streets, Judson is justly proud . . . massive shade trees, evergreens and flowering shrubs set off Mills' mill in an enchanting vision<sup>17</sup>

The Arial mill village, . . . on the wooded foothills of a mountain, is not unlike in appearance one of the summer settlements of middle class Floridians in the North Carolina mountains<sup>18</sup>

Wide streets, sometimes paved, are flanked on either side by gravel walks. Grass and trees are very common. In the model villages landscaped areas are found which compare with the grounds owned by middle class townspeople<sup>19</sup>

Paul Blanshard believes that the cotton mill villages are better than workers' residential sections in the average Southern town and have advantages superior to those of the tenements in large cities<sup>20</sup> Measured by the standards of the farm and the surrounding countryside, the textile village certainly ranks high<sup>21</sup> William P. Jacobs thinks that the average community in South Carolina would suffer if compared with the cotton mill village<sup>22</sup> After his critical study of the Southern cotton mill village situation, Paul Blanshard writes

The large new mills are commonly providing their workers with the residential advantages of a city, and a good deal of intelligent social service is in evidence<sup>23</sup>

<sup>15</sup> 153, p. 147      <sup>16</sup> 13, pp. 21-22      <sup>17</sup> Cited by 13, p. 81      <sup>18</sup> 121.

<sup>19</sup> 228, p. 26, 159, pp. 144-145 When the company does not keep the yards and lawns in order, they are poorly kept. Usually, fences are repaired and hedges are trimmed by the company. The mill also sees that garbage is removed at regular periods. 159, pp. 157-158

<sup>20</sup> 21, pp. 46-47, 24, p. 143      <sup>21</sup> 230, p. 337      <sup>22</sup> 120, p. 189      <sup>23</sup> 24, p. 143



Against these impressions of the old and the new villages may be set a picture of a typical Carolina mill community. The village consists of two hundred houses, which are square with slight bungalow modifications. All are painted white, but have become a dingy color. They are lined up regularly on the streets of the village. The main street has rows of fine young trees and curbs and gutters. Running water and sewerage are the only unusual features.<sup>24</sup>

#### HOUSING IN THE VILLAGE

The houses in the Carolina mill villages vary in size and appearance. Some are holdovers from former days. "Pineville [near Charlotte] is a group of shabby, boxlike bungalows on stilts," according to a writer in *The New Republic*.<sup>25</sup> Sinclair Lewis states that the houses at Marion, North Carolina, are poorly constructed.<sup>26</sup> A conservative monthly journal reports that the conditions in one of the worst villages are as follows: "The rain and the cold beat upon tar-papered shacks. Water runs in through the roofs, down the walls, between the cracks in the doors."<sup>27</sup> Fortunately only a few of these types of dwellings are found in these communities.

Practically all of the houses are frame structures with some architectural variations.<sup>28</sup> Most of them are now equipped with modern conveniences. In a South Carolina town a mill has attractive one-story stucco bungalows, enclosed down to the ground.<sup>29</sup> A few North Carolina villages have cosy dormitories, which are rented to single workers.<sup>30</sup> One of the model Southern villages is described as follows by a Northern visitor:

They are a good deal alike. There are three-room, four-room, and five-room houses . . . Foundation, several brick posts. The sills are placed on these posts. Style, bungalow or cottage. Exterior finish, clapboards. . . Chimney, brick. The general plan of the three-room house is L-shaped. They are painted white or light gray. There is a piazza, big enough for the whole number of occupants and more . . . [Inside] the walls are of wall-board with wood trim on the joints, and some walls are plastered . . . The interior color is usually light gray. They are well lighted by plenty of windows.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> 100, p. 257.    <sup>25</sup> 246, p. 323.    <sup>26</sup> 148, p. 18.    <sup>27</sup> 188, p. 74.    <sup>28</sup> 22,  
p. 278    <sup>29</sup> 231, p. 495    <sup>30</sup> 223, p. 25    <sup>31</sup> 233, pp. 26-27.

Paul Blanshard's description of mill houses is worth noting

The composite Southern mill house is a flat wooden box, one story in height and lifted up from the ground by brick and wooden piles. Inside, the rooms are square—that is an adequate description. The older mill villages consisted of rows and rows of houses exactly alike—the same porch, the same paint, the same railing. In the newer villages, there is sufficient variety to satisfy the most befuddled person seeking to identify his home at night. One house will have a solid porch rail and the next a picket rail. One will have a flattened gable and another a peak. The first house in a row will be white trimmed with green, the second green, trimmed with white, and the third all white. And then back to the style of the first again.<sup>32</sup>

The most common mill house is a square four-room structure.<sup>33</sup> Three-room L-shaped houses are frequently found also.<sup>34</sup> These dwellings have two rooms in front with a chimney between and another room at the rear.<sup>35</sup> There are a few five- or six-room houses of two stories.<sup>36</sup> Electric lights, water, and sewerage systems are the general conveniences most often found in Carolina mill houses.<sup>37</sup> Bathrooms are not very common,<sup>38</sup> though it is estimated that there were 11,772 in Southern mill villages in 1923.<sup>39</sup> Mill owners contend that workers do not know how to use modern bathing facilities, and repeat the story that some Piedmont mill operative used a bath tub for scalding a hog at butchering time and for depositing coal and potatoes.<sup>40</sup>

Eighty-two per cent of five hundred families in Gaston County, North Carolina, had sewing machines, and half that number had refrigerators.<sup>41</sup> In another study of a hundred families the same investigator found one telephone and two vacuum cleaners.<sup>42</sup> Overcrowding has been common in the villages. In 1929 there were eight and ten people in three-room houses in Marion, North Carolina.<sup>43</sup> Jennings J. Rhyne reports one house with one bed, twelve with two beds, twenty-two with three beds, and twenty-eight with four beds, in a study of a hundred families.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>32</sup> 24, p. 143    <sup>33</sup> 159, p. 148, 223, pp. 25, 125; 165, p. 10, 100, p. 228  
<sup>34</sup> 100, p. 223, 159, p. 148    <sup>35</sup> 159, pp. 145-148    <sup>36</sup> 100, pp. 222-225    <sup>37</sup> 100,  
pp. 230-234, 13, p. 74, 97, p. 347, 159, pp. 144-145, 223, pp. 136-138    <sup>38</sup> 159,  
p. 152, 100, pp. 230-231    <sup>39</sup> 21, p. 46.    <sup>40</sup> 213, p. 71.    <sup>41</sup> 223, p. 137  
<sup>42</sup> 224, p. 126    <sup>43</sup> 27, p. 352    <sup>44</sup> 224, p. 126

## PATERNALISM OF THE VILLAGE SYSTEM

Probably the most criticized feature of Southern cotton manufacturing is the paternalism which grows out of the company ownership of the village houses and the adjoining property. This system arose, not because the mill owners wished to control human beings, but because of necessity.<sup>45</sup> The semi-rural character of early textile manufacturing necessitated ownership and control of the village for a time, and the primitive ideas of the workers made direction and guidance necessary.<sup>46</sup> The people who came to the villages were too poor to buy their own homes. Frequently the mills were in isolated places, so that local capital could not furnish housing facilities.<sup>47</sup> Thus it was inevitable that the villages should be built by mill promoters. Moreover, the old planter pattern was easily carried into industry by the owner.<sup>48</sup> He was responsible for his people. Often he visited the sick in their homes and advised the unfortunate in times of crisis.<sup>49</sup> The mill manager was doing a good service to people who were incapable of directing their own affairs.<sup>50</sup> The mills gave everything: work, wages, homes, stores, churches, and schools. "All was received with gratitude as became families which had endured life at a minimum."<sup>51</sup> Speaking of this situation, William P. Jacobs says:

The mill usually supplies fuel at a minimum wholesale cost, and sometimes free. The mill usually supplies water and lights, and sometimes gas. Frequently the mill assumes doctors' and hospital bills, the cost of clinics, medical supplies, nurseries, and frequently assumes much of the burden of the cost of education, religion, recreation and amusement. To such an extent is this true that usually the cotton mill operative of South Carolina has little to buy.<sup>52</sup>

The company store has been regarded as one of the worst aspects of paternalism. In the early days wages were paid in scrip, which was used for purchasing goods at the store, and before any wages were paid, the mill usually collected all debts owed to its establishments. This system made it possible for the company to operate on less capital.<sup>53</sup> While never so common as the critics have

<sup>45</sup> Evans in 36, p. 160, 178, p. 264. <sup>46</sup> Schwenning in 48, p. 69. <sup>47</sup> 223, pp. 20-21, 100, p. 219.

<sup>48</sup> 192, pp. 254-255. <sup>49</sup> 160, p. 18. <sup>50</sup> 279, p. 126. <sup>51</sup> 178, p. 10.

<sup>52</sup> 180, p. 66. <sup>53</sup> 100, pp. 189-195, 223, pp. 23-24.

led readers to believe,<sup>54</sup> the company store does function as another encircling arm of the management

Some students of the mill problem think that the village is a blessing, in fact, the most influential factor in developing the New South

. (The) southern cotton mill village [is] a civilizing and elevating social force . . . . Through the mill villages the owners have prospered and at the same time have developed a people who fifty years ago were figuratively asleep<sup>55</sup>

Paul Blanshard, after a study of Carolina mills, concludes that paternalism could not have been avoided and that the village system has benefits

. . . It seems to me that the mill village is, on the whole, a genuine blessing to the cotton mill workers and that the manufacturers are doing the only intelligent thing that could be done in building mill villages for their employees.<sup>56</sup>

The worker has some freedom. He is not tied down to a job and can move to another village when the mood strikes him<sup>57</sup>. By providing cheap houses for all employees, the owners give private landlords little chance for exploitation. And there is no "keeping up with the Joneses." One worker's house is as good as another's.<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, the system has been the most effective agency for accentuating the traits of dependence and patience which the tenant farmer brought to the mill. The operative is virtually deprived of citizenship.<sup>59</sup>

The long years in the mill village, the paternalism under which they had lived, had taken initiative from many. They did not seem to be able to cope with their difficulties alone.<sup>60</sup>

The village system was probably a necessary evolutionary step in the development of the South, but it is certainly not "an agency of democracy" today.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Fewer than seventy-five of 322 mills in North Carolina have ever had company stores. There were twenty-four in 1929. 100, pp. 187-192.

<sup>55</sup> 97, pp. 346-347, 349. <sup>56</sup> 21, p. 44. <sup>57</sup> 21, p. 48, 24, p. 148, Schwenning in 48, p. 70. <sup>58</sup> 21, pp. 45-47.

<sup>59</sup> 175, p. 485, 24, p. 144. Only about 70 per cent of North Carolina mill workers live in company houses. It is likely that the figure is higher for South Carolina. 219, 66, p. 171, 223, pp. 123-124.

<sup>60</sup> 264, p. 207. <sup>61</sup> 178, pp. 113, 264.

The majority of mill men believe that village ownership is necessary. It insures better morality, sanitation, and housing than would be likely under other conditions. A small number of manufacturers, however, question the social and economic advantages of the present organization.<sup>62</sup>

Naturally the owner does not permit people who do not work in the mill to occupy his houses at the low rentals.<sup>63</sup> In the early days the manager expected a worker from each room. Now he figures from three-eighths to two-thirds of a worker per room, and usually one good worker can hold a house.<sup>64</sup> Although there is no general rule regarding the number of operatives a house must furnish, and the managers are usually reasonable, most persons above fourteen living in mill village houses have in the past been working in the mills.<sup>65</sup> Two studies, one of a Greenville, South Carolina, and the other of a Gastonia, North Carolina, mill village, show about two workers per house.<sup>66</sup>

A number of attempts at home ownership have been tried. Practically all have been abandoned.<sup>67</sup> The Judson Mill at Greenville, South Carolina, sponsored one plan, and the Proximity Manufacturing Company, Greensboro, North Carolina, another. Mill people buy lots, but they soon sell if they can make a profit.<sup>68</sup> However, on the edge of villages, there are many communities which are inhabited by home-owning mill workers. These operatives are stable employees, but their houses usually rank below those in the village on a socio-economic rating scale.<sup>69</sup>

#### INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY IN THE VILLAGE

Various schemes for industrial democracy have been attempted by Southern cotton mill owners. For a number of years Henry P. Kendall has had a mayor and board of aldermen elected by the people in his model villages. These bodies manage local and neighborhood matters. Bootleggers, drunkards, and loose women are driven out of the community by these representative bodies. Sanitary reforms and minor improvements, also, are suggested by the organization. It is the opinion of President Kendall that the board has "been an instrument in maintaining a fine standard of

<sup>62</sup> 100, pp. 270-272    <sup>63</sup> 189, p. 355, 23, p. 115    <sup>64</sup> 100, p. 268, 155, p. 27

<sup>65</sup> 223, pp. 131-132, 23, p. 115    <sup>66</sup> 13, p. 76, 221, p. 11.    <sup>67</sup> 100, pp. 273-276

<sup>68</sup> 100, pp. 273-276; 72, p. 36, Schwenning in 43, p. 70.    <sup>69</sup> 213, p. 67, 223, p. 139.

civic pride. . . <sup>70</sup> Industrial open forums were attempted in three Greenville, South Carolina, mills, but they were later abandoned. One owner says that he called the people together when there was something mutually interesting to discuss. <sup>71</sup> The Saxon Mill at Spartanburg, South Carolina, has had a type of self-control. Minor moral issues are discussed in conference, and conclusions are reached by the group. <sup>72</sup> The Durham Hosiery Mills had a highly organized plan for industrial control. It provided for a cabinet, a senate, and a house of representatives, which gave a voice to managers, overseers, and workers. The body had considerable power in the mill and the village, but the depression in textiles caused its abandonment. <sup>73</sup> In the Winnsboro Mills and in at least seven other South Carolina plants are co-operative bodies which have a voice in running village and mill affairs. <sup>74</sup>

One of the most complete schemes of industrial democracy was established at the Abbeville Cotton Mills, Abbeville, South Carolina. A board of mill management, consisting of six members, three of whom were elected by the board of directors of the mill and three by the board of operatives, had general supervision over a profit sharing plan and the co-operative management of the mill and village. The board of operatives consisted of ten members elected by the people. This body supervised the assignment of houses, the repair work in the village, and the protection of mill property. It had the right to make recommendations to the board of mill management. An executive secretary, whose salary was paid by the mill, was employed by the board of operatives. The board also had charge of the operation of an \$80,000 community building. <sup>75</sup> W. M. Langley, superintendent, and Harry Powell, shipping clerk, believe that the Abbeville plan failed because of rivalry among the workers and because of their individualism. <sup>76</sup> The writer's personal knowledge of this situation would lead him to conclude that a lack of education among the workers was chiefly responsible for the failure of this excellent plan.

A number of mills have welfare committees which distribute relief of various kinds. But schemes that are essentially democratic are rare. Most of them carry the trappings of overlordship. <sup>77</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Kendall in *228*, pp. 18-14, *100*, pp. 199-201. <sup>71</sup> *18*, pp. 88-89. <sup>72</sup> *218*, pp. 106-107.

<sup>73</sup> *100*, pp. 201-206. In 1919 the plan was in operation in thirteen mills, most of which were owned by the Carr family. *100*, p. 202.

<sup>74</sup> *219*. <sup>75</sup> *273*. <sup>76</sup> *142*, *216*. <sup>77</sup> *100*, pp. 198-199.

## GENERAL WELFARE WORK

Broadus Mitchell writes in *The Industrial Revolution in the South*

There is no other industry in the United States which directly undertakes so much for the social improvement and well-being of its workers as the cotton manufactures of the South.<sup>78</sup>

It was to be expected that the planter-overlord turned industrialist would do something for the workers when he had money to spare. This is a feature of the paternalistic system which he had unwittingly established and an evidence of his real philanthropy.<sup>79</sup> He should help poor folks who had always looked to the chief man in the community for guidance. The mill owner was performing a service, in fact, he saw no other way of improving the condition of *his* people.<sup>80</sup> And the welfare program paid, according to the business leaders.<sup>81</sup>

Harriet L. Herring reports that half of the mills which she studied in North Carolina do some welfare work and that a third do considerable.<sup>82</sup> Because of the fact that South Carolina has more large mills than North Carolina, the amount of welfare work in the former state is probably greater.<sup>83</sup> There are forty-eight special community houses in North Carolina. They cost from a small figure up to \$125,000. Many are \$6,000 structures.<sup>84</sup> Seventy community buildings, fifty or more Young Men's Christian Association buildings, fifty playgrounds, and one hundred athletic fields are found in South Carolina mill villages.<sup>85</sup> Parks, swimming pools, and golf courses are also part of the recreational facilities. The community buildings in South Carolina cost anywhere from \$2,500 up to \$85,000. Five thousand dollar buildings are common.<sup>86</sup> William P. Jacobs puts the total cost of recreational equipment in the state's cotton mill villages at \$2,994,570.46, and the yearly maintenance figure at \$136,851.60.<sup>87</sup> Only the big mills spend large sums on welfare work. In 1929 the Brandon Corporation of Greenville, South Carolina, allocated \$90,000 for extra-mill activity,<sup>88</sup> while the Smyre Mill, Gaston County, North

<sup>78</sup> 178, pp. 257-258. <sup>79</sup> 100, pp. 381, 297-298. <sup>80</sup> 223, pp. 34-35, 27-28, 213, p. 32. <sup>81</sup> 13, p. 97, 178, p. 258, 179, p. 166. <sup>82</sup> 100, p. 298. <sup>83</sup> A survey of 344 mills of the entire South gave considerably larger percentages. But this study was made at the peak of the welfare work. 78.

<sup>84</sup> 100, pp. 129-130. <sup>85</sup> 120, pp. 182-183, 127, p. 41. <sup>86</sup> 13, pp. 59-61, 219.

<sup>87</sup> 120, p. 183. <sup>88</sup> 279, p. 126.

Carolina, spent \$2,520 for community work.<sup>80</sup> The years from 1914 to 1920 were the period of greatest welfare expansion. Forty units were initiated at this time. The mills were making money and were willing to spend it. But the post-war depression cut heavily into welfare work, and 1926 found only eighty-eight programs in 322 mills in North Carolina.<sup>80</sup>

The three chief features of the welfare activity of the Carolina cotton mill owners—health, religion, and education—will be discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter. In addition there are various minor activities.<sup>81</sup> These are generally supervised by the community worker in a large village and by a member of the office staff in a small village. The community worker, who usually gets the modest salary of \$100 to \$150 a month, is almost never trained for the job. She has been a teacher, a nurse, or an instructor in domestic science. Her job is one of interpreting the owners to the workers and the workers to the owners. She directs various kinds of programs, the program selected usually being the pet hobby of the individual mill owner.<sup>82</sup> Some of these minor activities will be discussed.

The most popular sport in Carolina cotton mill villages is baseball. A very large majority of the mills have teams, which are generally financed by the company.<sup>83</sup> Basketball comes next in popularity, and tennis is a poor third.<sup>84</sup> Swimming, boxing, volley ball, golf, bowling, and football are also mentioned by the mill managers.<sup>85</sup> During the summer a number of mills organize mountain camps where various types of recreation are provided.<sup>86</sup> Brass bands are found at several Carolina mills.<sup>87</sup> Club work is common where community workers are employed. Girls meet weekly for parties, games, and literary activities.<sup>88</sup> Not infrequently mills give Fourth of July dinners, picnics, fish fries, and hot suppers for the operatives. At Christmas they send baskets of fruits and nuts.<sup>89</sup> Here and there Boy Scout troops have been organized. A village fair, designed to stimulate creativeness, was held at Greenville, South Carolina.<sup>100</sup> At Graniteville, in the same state,

<sup>80</sup> 108, p. 84. <sup>81</sup> 100, pp. 118-124. <sup>82</sup> 100, pp. 209-213, 223, p. 80. <sup>83</sup> 13, p. 62, 100, pp. 106-108, 132, 301-302, Herring in 43, pp. 75-77. <sup>84</sup> 100, pp. 136-137, 219. <sup>85</sup> 219. <sup>86</sup> 120, p. 183, 178, p. 262, 219, 223, p. 14. <sup>87</sup> 213, p. 47, 178, p. 262, 13, p. 64. <sup>88</sup> 100, pp. 141-144, 219. <sup>89</sup> 100, pp. 146, 147, 155, pp. 61-62.

<sup>90</sup> 100, pp. 112-114. <sup>100</sup> 13, p. 88.



a game preserve of four thousand acres has been established<sup>101</sup> In the large majority of mill villages garden spaces are set aside Some workers raise vegetables in these plots, and others have flowers.<sup>102</sup> Contests are often held, and prizes are given for the best vegetables and flowers<sup>103</sup>

Lack of preparation on the part of both the mill people and the directors has been responsible for the many failures and the partial successes of welfare programs. Still, much improvement has taken place in village life as a result of the extra-production activities of the manufacturers.<sup>104</sup> But the programs have not affected all the people Jennings J Rhyne states that almost 60 per cent of mill folk in Gaston County, North Carolina, never have engaged in any sort of recreational life<sup>105</sup> Harriet L Herring says that many families are left entirely untouched by the programs<sup>106</sup> Certainly there is no universal approval of the activities<sup>107</sup> The owner has often been keenly disappointed by his workers' lack of appreciation Recently the feeling has been growing that the owners are trying to buy contentment and docility on the part of the workers by means of the welfare program<sup>108</sup> With the coming of a wider social outlook, many observers feel that welfare programs should be reduced or abandoned and wages should be raised.<sup>109</sup> It may be that the owner has been his own worst enemy:

His tremendous social program, being based on the Lady Bountiful idea, is pauperizing his workers, depriving them of the moral fiber to resist the infection of anarchic ideas Radicalism has made no appreciable headway among southern workers so far, but the field is being prepared for it, and the southern cotton mill operator in only the rarest instances is taking any intelligent steps to disarm it<sup>110</sup>

The mill worker needs training in the fundamentals of democratic life<sup>111</sup> Possibly Loretta Carroll Bailey is not expressing a wrong point of view when she has Kate say of the welfare worker in *Job's Kinfolks*: "The low-down dirty dog Sneakin' around, pryn' on

<sup>101</sup> 72, p 16      <sup>102</sup> 108, p 41, 13, p 79, 100, pp 206-209      <sup>103</sup> 100, pp 206-209, 219      <sup>104</sup> 213, pp 123-126, 173, p 259; 223, p 171-172, 100, pp 301-302      <sup>105</sup> 223, p 171      <sup>106</sup> 100, pp. 132-134      <sup>107</sup> 100, pp 304-306, 72, pp. 17-19, 155, pp 109-110, 153, pp 301-302, 21, p 53, 189, p 353, 223, pp 34-35.      <sup>108</sup> 178, pp 148-149      <sup>109</sup> 55, p 332      <sup>110</sup> 125, p 55.      <sup>111</sup> 178, p 236; 189, p 357, 155, pp 32-33.

people's kids Her an' the mill owners is just as thick as molasses "<sup>112</sup>

#### THE HEALTH PROGRAM

The mill owners have been quite concerned about the health of their people and have spent considerable sums on this feature of the welfare program. Ninety-one of the 322 North Carolina mills studied by Harriet L. Herring had some kind of health program.<sup>113</sup> Studies show that sixty-seven plants in North Carolina and forty to fifty in South Carolina have nurses.<sup>114</sup> Community nurses usually visit the sick in their homes. In the larger mill villages clinics are held.<sup>115</sup> Two-thirds of the South Carolina mills had some type of first aid equipment, according to an investigation conducted in 1923.<sup>116</sup> Campaigns designed to eradicate mosquitoes, typhoid fever, and malaria have been successful in a number of North Carolina mill towns.<sup>117</sup> Also, the sewer systems and the improved sanitation of the newer mills have had their influence in improving health conditions.<sup>118</sup>

Studies show that mill people are more prone to diseases, particularly those of a respiratory nature, than the average person.<sup>119</sup> Pellagra and tuberculosis are more common in mill villages than elsewhere.<sup>120</sup> In addition, general sickness takes a high toll. In a survey of nineteen mill families, it was found that only three had not had recent illness.<sup>121</sup> Joanna Farrell Sturdivant reports that over half of the people of Carrboro, North Carolina, had some kind of sickness in 1923.<sup>122</sup> Thus there was a real need for this phase of the welfare program, and improvement in health conditions is due largely to the extra-mill activity of the owners.

#### RELIGION ON THE HILL

Fundamentalist religion probably influences life more definitely in the South than in any other part of the nation. "Curiously,

<sup>112</sup> *II*, p. 51. <sup>113</sup> *100*, p. 161

<sup>114</sup> *100*, p. 163, *180*, p. 180. The returns from the questionnaire indicate that Jacobs' figures are too high for the present. *219*

<sup>115</sup> *100*, pp. 159, 183-187, *219*. The company doctor is not very common. *219*

<sup>116</sup> *278*, p. 70. <sup>117</sup> *100*, pp. 167-172. <sup>118</sup> *120*, pp. 179-180. <sup>119</sup> *Otey* in *36*, p. 165, *65*, p. 144, *245*, pp. 1090-1091. <sup>120</sup> *245*, pp. 1090-1091. <sup>121</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>122</sup> *248*, chap. in, p. 4. Dr. James A. Hayne, executive officer of the South Carolina State Board of Health, says that the health of mill people has been improved by moving to the village. *31*, p. 36

yet inevitably, the religious aspect of the sectional thinking has crept into every phase of Southern life "<sup>123</sup> It is, therefore, not strange that mill owners have spent large sums on church construction and on religious programs

The Protestant churches dominate religious life in the Carolinas. In the mill village are found the more primitive branches of the popular sects. Marjorie A. Potwin says that "there is no vague perplexity or academic questioning to sap salvation "<sup>124</sup> The anthropomorphic concept of God, erected into a theology by John Calvin, is generally believed. The religion preached is concerned with individual salvation. Hell fire and damnation, with all the emotional accompaniments, are common topics in village sermons. Scripture is quoted to encourage contentment <sup>125</sup> If life is hard in this world, there is another where the streets are paved with gold, and no one toils <sup>126</sup> The exposition of the gospel is the sole duty of the church. The ethical teachings of Jesus and his mode of life are accepted, but not always preached <sup>127</sup> Thus there is little of the social gospel in the sermons of Carolina clergymen. Most of them do not consider or do not choose to accept the social implications of Christ's ethical standards <sup>128</sup> The church has rarely<sup>129</sup> concerned itself with any economic or social problems in the mill village.<sup>130</sup> In fact, it has sometimes discouraged entertainments and parties. Many older mill people are opposed to any amusements on religious grounds. Picture shows, dancing halls, and swimming pools are wrong in the eyes of many of these primitive folk. Any kind of card playing is a sin <sup>131</sup>

This neglect of the vital problems of life is not due to capitalistic

<sup>123</sup> 39, p. 506      <sup>124</sup> 213, p. 96

<sup>125</sup> Many Biblical references can be cited. A few of the more common are. Matthew 20 21, Matthew 19 21, and Luke 16 19-31

<sup>126</sup> 178, pp. 272-277, 238, p. 41, 197, p. 40

<sup>127</sup> Twenty-seven out of twenty-nine authorities state that religion on "mill hill" is concerned with another world. 218

<sup>128</sup> Potwin in 52, p. 262. An able Presbyterian clergyman of South Carolina remarked that he had been reading *The World Tomorrow* for some months but saw no religion in it. 253

<sup>129</sup> A group of Southern ministers did sign a letter to the industrial leaders of the South, but few ministers from the Carolinas were included. Indeed, some Carolina clergymen denounced the letter. 168, pp. 61-66

<sup>130</sup> 8, 155, pp. 57, 99, 128-130, 175, p. 491.

<sup>131</sup> 254, pp. 164-165, 223, pp. 178, 199, 224, p. 159, 197, p. 13.

propaganda<sup>132</sup> The owners have not influenced the thinking of the church, rather, the ministry as well as the laity accept the economic and social philosophy of modern business. Witness the remarks in a leading religious journal of South Carolina

The noblest and best service that has ever been rendered, on a large scale, to the laborers of the South has been given by our mills *Not to see this is to be blind* There may be many things yet to be done But no one who knows anything of Southern labor, of the unusually high ideals for human betterment that great numbers of our mills, at great cost, have lived up to and are living up to, and of the Christian character of the vast majority of our mill managers, can fail to see that these mills are worthy of our gratitude, sympathy and support Our mill pastors and mill churches know this, and knowing it they are in sympathy with those that are working for their welfare, and are not in sympathy with aliens who are seeking to exploit them<sup>133</sup>

The pastors of the villages are generally the poorer ministers of their respective denominations. "Most of the preachers are of the ultra-fundamentalist type, and they tend to keep the pot of denominational unrest and bickerings boiling"<sup>134</sup> They know little of economics and sociology and cannot, therefore, concern themselves with the cleavages between capital and labor<sup>135</sup> They look up to the manager or president in the respectful manner of the workers He is the outstanding man in the community<sup>136</sup> It is not inaccurate for Granny to say of the minister in *Gathering Storm*: "He doan never say nuthin' 'bout what matters"<sup>137</sup>

And to religion is the most common and widespread welfare activity of Carolina mill owners<sup>138</sup> Harriet L. Herring says that in North Carolina there are only twenty-one cotton mills which have not helped to build or support one or more churches<sup>139</sup> William P. Jacobs states that 110 church buildings in South Carolina mill villages were "erected or supplied at the expense of the cotton mills"<sup>140</sup> Sometimes the church is built outright on mill

<sup>132</sup> A number of authorities believe that the manufacturers dominate mill clergymen. Owners and managers do take an active part in religious activities, but that is to be expected. It is a part of the Southern pattern. For different views see: 155, pp. 56, 59, 96-97, 100, pp. 96, 100, 97, p. 349, 150, pp. 9-10; 13, p. 49, 11, p. 57

<sup>133</sup> Cited in 121 <sup>134</sup> 100, p. 334, 150, p. 14 <sup>135</sup> 197, pp. 49-50 <sup>136</sup> 21, pp. 86-87 <sup>137</sup> 196, p. 37 <sup>138</sup> 100, p. 87. <sup>139</sup> 100, p. 91 <sup>140</sup> 120, p. 184.

property. Often the land is donated. Again, a contribution to the building fund is made. Aid in the form of lights, fuel, and pastor's salary is common.<sup>141</sup> William P. Jacobs estimates that \$1,204,776.32 has been given for permanent church equipment in South Carolina mill villages and that the yearly maintenance figure is \$121,828.<sup>142</sup>

It is surprising that twelve out of thirty-nine experts, in replying to the questionnaire, say that the mill worker is not fundamentally religious.<sup>143</sup> There is a possibility that they interpreted "religious" in a wider sense, which is foreign to mill life, or took his church attendance as the criterion.<sup>144</sup> Jennings J. Rhyne says that 60 per cent of the Gaston County, North Carolina, families attend church regularly and 23 per cent occasionally. The number of young people going regularly is 66 per cent.<sup>145</sup> Alexander Ramsay Batchelor states that half of the children in Whitmire, South Carolina, are in Sunday School.<sup>146</sup> J. F. Ligon reports that 41 per cent of the people at a large South Carolina mill<sup>147</sup> are church members. The figures for Gaston County, North Carolina, villages are 78 per cent in 1914,<sup>148</sup> 80 per cent in 1925,<sup>149</sup> and 71 per cent in 1929.<sup>150</sup> But a number of observers do think that the hold of the church is loosening, and that the worker is becoming indifferent.<sup>151</sup> However, the majority believe he is fundamentally religious.<sup>152</sup> Perhaps the statement of William P. Jacobs is too rosy, but it is indicative:

There is nothing closer to the heart of the cotton mill operative than his church, and perhaps nothing so uplifting and so wholesome, and so necessary to his happiness.<sup>153</sup>

Statistical studies show that in practically all villages the Bap-

<sup>141</sup> 100, pp. 80-91. <sup>142</sup> 120, p. 185. <sup>143</sup> 218.

<sup>144</sup> In the sense in which "religious" is used here, the word means that the teachings of the church do affect in a definite way the life of the operative. And while he may not go to church, he believes in its teachings and will not tolerate anyone who does not. "Blasphemy is the first crime in the Southern calendar" 37, p. 190.

<sup>145</sup> 224, pp. 152-154. <sup>146</sup> 16, p. 23. <sup>147</sup> 150, pp. 12-13. <sup>148</sup> 221, p. 16. <sup>149</sup> 224, p. 155. <sup>150</sup> 223, p. 167.

<sup>151</sup> 150, pp. 6-8, 254, p. 178, 155, pp. 28-29, 197, p. 51.

<sup>152</sup> 218, 13, p. 50, 37, pp. 189-191, 223, pp. 14, 15, 200.

<sup>153</sup> 120, p. 185.

tist denomination is strongest, and the Methodist Episcopal is a close second. Other churches which have small memberships are the Presbyterian, the Lutheran, the Holiness, and the Episcopal.<sup>154</sup> The Holiness sect, which is probably the most primitive of all religious bodies in the Carolinas, has considerable influence in some villages.<sup>155</sup> The people live apart and follow a life of self-denial and hardship.<sup>156</sup> Their ministers are probably more ignorant than those of any other group. Because of the emotionalism of their services, mill managers usually oppose them.<sup>157</sup> A careful observer of mill life in South Carolina thinks that they are a most harmful influence.<sup>158</sup> One writer contends that

. . . an inadequate religion is the sin which perhaps most of all and most easily besets us in the South. It is this weight which seems most to hinder our highest efforts.<sup>159</sup>

#### EDUCATION IN THE VILLAGE

Judged by national standards the Southern states are near the bottom of the list educationally. For many years Edgar W. Knight of the University of North Carolina has spoken and written of the educational plight of his homeland and has lately summarized his findings in a chapter of *Culture in the South*.<sup>160</sup>

The schools on "mill hill" are no exception to the rule, though they are generally better than the adjacent rural schools.<sup>161</sup> As has been previously stated, mill owners aid education in their program of general welfare.<sup>162</sup> A recent study estimates that ninety-five school buildings now in use have been erected by the cotton mills of South Carolina. The school equipment in at least sixty more has been donated by the companies. William P. Jacobs sets the yearly maintenance figure for South Carolina mill schools at \$230,171.96 and the capital outlay at \$3,381,238.48. These outlays are in addition to certain taxes paid by the mills.<sup>163</sup> It is likely that North Carolina, whose mills are smaller, does not have so large a percentage of schools built and financed by the mills.<sup>164</sup> John Harrison Cook found that 24 out of 109 North Carolina mills owned the school buildings.<sup>165</sup> There has been a definite move-

<sup>154</sup> 155, pp. 55-56, 213, p. 97; 248, chap. vi, p. 5, 223, p. 170, 16, pp. 21-22.  
<sup>155</sup> 238, p. 40. <sup>156</sup> 154. <sup>157</sup> 100, p. 100. <sup>158</sup> 89. <sup>159</sup> 137, p. 22.  
<sup>160</sup> Knight in 52, pp. 211-228. <sup>161</sup> 50, p. 46. <sup>162</sup> Usually the elementary grades are at the mill and the higher grades are "up-town." 100, pp. 47-49, 58-60.  
<sup>163</sup> 120, pp. 178-179. <sup>164</sup> 100, pp. 61-62. <sup>165</sup> 50, pp. 12-13.

ment in North Carolina to get all schools under county control <sup>166</sup> And the replies on the questionnaire would seem to indicate a similar trend in South Carolina <sup>167</sup>

The question of the financial advantage of school control and operation by the mill is a moot one Harriet L. Herring says that there are differences of opinion <sup>168</sup> John Harrison Cook has shown that ten North Carolina mills gain financially by not being within the city school districts Where a local tax is levied, the mills pay 73 per cent of what they would pay were they in the special districts <sup>169</sup> He concludes

It was usually much cheaper for the mills to provide inferior schools for the children of their workers rather than to pay school taxes <sup>170</sup>

It has been claimed that the owners use the control over education as an additional means of tightening their grip on mill life <sup>171</sup> But there is little evidence that the mills censor teachings It is not necessary The teachers' beliefs are the same as those of the owners. <sup>172</sup>

The large sums spent for education usually go into buildings There is a \$125,000 school plant at Pacolet, South Carolina, and a \$100,000 structure at Piedmont in the same state <sup>173</sup> It is common for the mill schools to run longer terms and have instruction superior to that of the rural schools <sup>174</sup> However, educational advantages are not equal to those of most city systems. <sup>175</sup>

The Carolina mill school teachers know almost nothing of progressive education <sup>176</sup> The "three R's" form the core of the curriculum, and there is little more. The equipment is traditional and consists of the most meager essentials Seven out of forty-six mill schools studied by John Harrison Cook had no books in the school other than texts <sup>177</sup> Usually the volumes found are cast-off fiction which no mill child would want to read. One mill system, the Parker Schools of Greenville, South Carolina, is among the most progressive in the South Here an activity program replaces the traditional studies <sup>178</sup> In the large majority of cases, however,

<sup>166</sup> 247    <sup>167</sup> 219    <sup>168</sup> 100, pp 60-61    <sup>169</sup> 50, pp 11-12    <sup>170</sup> 50, p 5  
<sup>171</sup> 50, p 13, 175, p 485.    <sup>172</sup> 131    <sup>173</sup> 178, pp 261-262.    <sup>174</sup> 178, pp 261-262, 37, p 347

<sup>175</sup> 61, p 96 In his 1925 report, the State Superintendent of Education in South Carolina said that some of the best schools in the state were in mill villages 213, p 118

<sup>176</sup> 50, pp 51-55, 224, pp 178-198    <sup>177</sup> 50, p 46    <sup>178</sup> 109, 178, p 261.

there is no adjustment of materials to educational needs. A certain set amount of subject matter is to be taught to boys and girls. Although this is much more than the fathers and the mothers of the children enjoyed, it is far from what might be given <sup>179</sup>

Mill children have been tested a number of times by achievement and intelligence tests. In most tests they rank lower than non-mill groups or national standards <sup>180</sup> Graham Bennett Dimmick reports no appreciable difference in physical growth between mill and non-mill children in Durham, North Carolina, as measured by the Baldwin norms. <sup>181</sup> John Harrison Cook made the following summary comment regarding his testings in North Carolina mill schools "Children of mill workers . . . fall considerably below standard in general intelligence. The native ability of this group, while lower than normal, is not as low as the scores would indicate." <sup>182</sup> A. M. Jordan has recently reported that mental tests involving language give Southern mill children 9 to 10 I. Q. points disadvantage. And he further finds a definite decrease in the I. Q. of mill children from about 100 at six years to 85 at thirteen years. <sup>183</sup> Paucity of environment causes this, according to Professor Jordan. Even so, mill children do not rank normal on non-language tests. <sup>184</sup>

Retardation is most common in mill schools <sup>185</sup> Jennings J. Rhyne reports more than 50 per cent in his Gaston County, North Carolina, study. <sup>186</sup> One hundred and twenty of 162 seventh grade pupils in mill schools were overage, according to a study done in 1925. <sup>187</sup>

The achievements of mill children based on grade norms would seem to be fairly satisfactory. But the children have not attained the advancement which other children of their age appear to have reached as ascertained by the norms for the age-grades. <sup>188</sup>

Poorly trained teachers, short school terms, inadequate facilities, late registration, and parental negligence are responsible for this retardation. <sup>189</sup>

<sup>179</sup> 189, p. 354. <sup>180</sup> 50, pp. 22, 30, 274, pp. 188-186, 122, p. 75, 93, p. 52; 64, pp. 120-130, 130, pp. 111-114. <sup>181</sup> 64, p. 129. <sup>182</sup> 50, p. 22. <sup>183</sup> 180, pp. 111, 114, 116. <sup>184</sup> 130, pp. 111, 113, 115. <sup>185</sup> 50, p. 29; 108, pp. 52-53, 189, p. 334, 223, p. 149. <sup>186</sup> 223, p. 149. <sup>187</sup> 50, p. 29. <sup>188</sup> 50, p. 30. <sup>189</sup> 223, p. 156. Some observers think that mill people are interested in the education of their children, more capable judges believe that they are indifferent. 223, pp. 150-151; 97, pp. 347-348; 213, p. 123.



There is unanimous agreement that most mill children leave school and go to work in the mill after the fourteenth birthday.<sup>190</sup> John Harrison Cook shows that the mill child has less chance than the rural child of attending high school.<sup>191</sup> The desire to make money, the transfer to uptown schools, the snobbishness of town children, and retardation are responsible for this dropping out of school after fourteen.<sup>192</sup> Apparently the owners have not opposed higher education,<sup>193</sup> but as a matter of fact, training beyond the compulsory period does not affect very many mill children.

#### ADULT EDUCATION IN THE VILLAGE

The education of adult cotton mill operatives was considered as early as 1874, according to Harriet L. Herring. From that time down to the present, night classes for mill workers have appeared and disappeared in North Carolina.<sup>194</sup> During the World War period moonlight schools, which gave instruction in the "three R's," spread over the Carolinas.<sup>195</sup> A great impetus to education for underprivileged whites came with the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act. Three types of classes, all common in the Carolinas, have grown out of the operations of this law. They are.

1. Night classes in subjects relating to the vocation.
2. Day trade schools usually operated as a part of a local high school.
3. Continuation schools designed to teach general subjects.<sup>196</sup>

Vocational night classes are the most common. In 1929-1930 there were 335 evening groups enrolling 4,804 students in North Carolina.<sup>197</sup> Eighteen plants in North Carolina have had courses for seven years, according to a study published in 1929.<sup>198</sup> There were 187 evening study centers in South Carolina in 1931-1932. They enrolled 4,072 students. Seventy per cent of these classes were in industrial communities. The curriculum of the night schools is predominantly vocational. Mill calculations, loom fixing, designing, carding, frame fixing, and weaving are the most

<sup>190</sup> 223, pp. 150-151; 108, pp. 54, 77, 50, pp. 39-42, 100, pp. 48-50; 155, pp. 48, 88, 123.

<sup>191</sup> 50, p. 46. Professor Cook shows that 15,245 children in North Carolina were limited in the opportunities for a high school education because they lived in cotton mill villages. 50, pp. 31-32.

<sup>192</sup> 50, p. 38, 100, pp. 48-50, 139, p. 354, 195. <sup>193</sup> 50, p. 10; 108, p. 77. <sup>194</sup> 100, pp. 67-71. <sup>195</sup> 100, pp. 71-72. <sup>196</sup> 100, p. 74. <sup>197</sup> 20, part 1, p. 55. <sup>198</sup> 100, p. 76.

popular courses <sup>199</sup> Almost every occupation in the mill is covered in the curriculum offered in these schools. The Southern states have adopted a standard score card and diploma for vocational training <sup>200</sup>

Here and there throughout the Carolinas one finds vocational departments in regular high schools. They are common in the large textile centers. The Parker District of Greenville, South Carolina, has a vocational high school, and there are four such institutions in North Carolina <sup>201</sup> These classes enrolled 2,585 white boys in 1931-1932 in South Carolina <sup>202</sup> About 1,700 students took manual training in North Carolina in 1929-1930 <sup>203</sup> These high school vocational courses give instruction in general shop practice, woodwork, mechanical drawing, textiles, machine-shop practice, and auto mechanics

Home economics education, which gives training in the care of the home, in the choice of diets, and in the selection of clothing has affected some cotton mill girls and women. But it is not so widespread in mill communities as trade education <sup>204</sup> The evening home economics classes have been popular in industrial communities, the Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina reports 271 schools which enrolled 3,501 women in these night classes during 1929-1930 <sup>205</sup>

Continuation schools have been very popular in South Carolina. Ten teachers were conducting continuation classes in nine communities, according to a study published in April, 1933 <sup>206</sup> Most schools are in mill villages and enroll children over fourteen years of age. The course of study for the continuation schools in South Carolina has progressive aims and is well adapted to the learning level of the pupils. While it is built on a project basis, there is too obvious a desire to develop a spirit of contentment with present conditions by means of the activities. The learnings are based almost exclusively on mill life. The world beyond "mill hill" is scarcely considered <sup>207</sup>

A most valuable program in adult education has been carried on by Wil Lou Gray, Adult School Supervisor for South Carolina, through her adult classes and her Opportunity School. Two groups of people are touched by this work

<sup>199</sup> 236, p. 62      <sup>200</sup> 118, pp. 2-18      <sup>201</sup> 236, p. 61.      <sup>202</sup> *Ibid*      <sup>203</sup> 20,  
part IV, p. 42      <sup>204</sup> 236, pp. 53-54.      <sup>205</sup> 20, part I, p. 54      <sup>206</sup> 117, p. 167.  
<sup>207</sup> 53, pp. 1-32; 128

. beginners who come principally from illiterate, poverty-stricken backgrounds, and the "teen" age or more ambitious adults who were forced out of school because of economic need <sup>208</sup>

In 1931-1932, 4,435 white people were taught by 305 teachers in these schools for the underprivileged in South Carolina. The part-time schools in North Carolina, which give education of much the same type, reached 1,020 pupils in 1929-1930 <sup>209</sup> In both states a very large percentage of these classes are in cotton mill communities. The Opportunity School, a summer institute for underprivileged white adults, is held each year at Clemson College, South Carolina <sup>210</sup> Although the leaders in this school have become expert in teaching the fundamental branches to adult illiterates, they have not done much in handling social and civic problems. Still, great praise should be given Miss Gray for her superior work among the mill operatives and tenant farmers in South Carolina. Under the Emergency Relief Education Act, sponsored by the National Recovery Administration, the Carolinas are receiving national aid for unemployed teachers who can instruct adults. The teaching of illiterates is the chief work of this project.

In the Parker School District, Greenville, South Carolina, is located a People's College, which is an adult institution attached to a public school system. Courses in English, business law, cooking, health, elementary art, parent education, international problems, and contemporary affairs are offered in the curriculum <sup>211</sup>

A most interesting venture in higher education is the Textile Institute, a junior college located near Spartanburg, South Carolina. The school was founded in 1911 and is planned so that the pupils may work a week in the cotton mill and study a week at the institute. The curriculum is dominantly classical; the college preparatory studies are given in the high school division and continued on the college level. Also, sectarianism of the Methodist type is clearly in evidence. Judged by the program of studies, this institution is doing little to meet the vital educational needs of cotton mill people <sup>212</sup>

Education of a somewhat propagandistic type is provided in the Southern Summer School for Women Workers at Burnsville, North Carolina. Labor history, English, economics, and creative

<sup>208</sup> *ibid.*, p. 55      <sup>209</sup> *ibid.*, p. 55, 80, part 1, p. 55      <sup>210</sup> *ibid.*      <sup>211</sup> *ibid.*, 201, 202.  
<sup>212</sup> 79

writing are successfully integrated into a program of study. Although only a small number of cotton mill girls are being touched by this school, significant leadership will probably come from the enterprise.<sup>213</sup> An indigenous Southern group of socialistic complexion is sponsoring a Carolina School for Workers at High Point, North Carolina. The goal of this institution is "education for a cooperative society." The program of studies is similar to that of the Southern Summer School for Women Workers.<sup>214</sup>

While these are the chief formal educative agencies, many other institutions have sponsored definite programs. Women's organizations, Bible classes, luncheon clubs, and fraternal orders have directed various adult activities from time to time.<sup>215</sup> And the whole welfare program with its ramifications into all phases of mill life has done much in educating adults. Indeed, many feel that the mills are a great educative force which brings the tenant from the serfdom of his farm to the benevolent despotism of the mill village.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>213</sup> 147, pp. 1381-1385, 164      <sup>214</sup> 210; 145      <sup>215</sup> 92      <sup>216</sup> 178, p. 257, 61

## Chapter Four

### THE CAROLINA COTTON MILLS AND THEIR OWNERS

#### THE MILLS

DURING the past decade, the Southern states have wrested the cotton textile leadership from New England. The two Carolinas account for three-fourths of the mills, and most of these are in the Piedmont.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, there is a 177-mile stretch in North Carolina on which are located 128 mills.<sup>2</sup> But the majority of the Carolina cotton mills are clustered around Charlotte. About 40 per cent of all North Carolina spindles are in Gaston, Mecklenburg, Rutherford, Cleveland, Lincoln, and Cabarrus Counties.<sup>3</sup> Spartanburg, Greenville, Anderson, York, Greenwood, and Union Counties have most of the South Carolina mills.<sup>4</sup> There is far from general agreement on the number of plants. Some organizations are counted as cotton mills, others are not. In North Carolina the tally is further complicated by many knitting mills and finishing plants. R. D. W. Connor says that there are 535 cotton mills in sixty-two of North Carolina's one hundred counties.<sup>5</sup> C. K. Brown counts 374.<sup>6</sup> Harriet L. Herring gives 377 for 1919-1920.<sup>7</sup> Another figure is 579.<sup>8</sup> Obviously estimates running over five hundred include the 128 knitting mills and probably the dyeing and finishing plants.<sup>9</sup> The South Carolina figures are 220 and 232.<sup>10</sup> The North Carolina factory frequently is a yarn or knitting mill.<sup>11</sup> South Carolina's plants are larger and generally weave as well as spin.<sup>12</sup> On June 30, 1931, North Carolina had 6,216,302 spindles in place, and South Carolina had 5,680,452.<sup>13</sup> The average number of employees in a North Carolina mill is 250 and in a South Carolina plant 468.<sup>14</sup> The Carolina mills manufacture sheetings, print cloths, ginghams, denims, drills, towels and towel-  
ing, shirtings, Osnaburgs, cotton table damask, tickings, cotton-

<sup>1</sup> 262, p. 291    <sup>2</sup> 31, p. 34    <sup>3</sup> 224, p. 37    <sup>4</sup> 240, p. 58    <sup>5</sup> 47, p. 59.  
<sup>6</sup> Brown in 36, p. 136    <sup>7</sup> 100, p. 24    <sup>8</sup> 85, p. 1190    <sup>9</sup> Brown in 36, pp. 138-139  
<sup>10</sup> 259, p. 28 (footnote); 240, p. 58, 279, p. 5    <sup>11</sup> Brown in 36, p. 138, 158, p. 253    <sup>12</sup> 169, p. 267    <sup>13</sup> 161, p. 45.    <sup>14</sup> Potwin in 116, p. 59.

ades, and cotton worsted goods. The South Carolina mills also make some fine cotton goods.<sup>15</sup>

#### THE OWNERS AND THE MANAGERS

The history of cotton textiles in the South, as has been briefly shown, is a story of Southern achievement. Most of North Carolina's mills were built by natives and are still owned by them.<sup>16</sup> In 1906 Holland Thompson found that 90 per cent of the invested capital in North Carolina mills was local.<sup>17</sup> In 1908, 75 per cent of the stock in South Carolina mills was owned in the state.<sup>18</sup> The Southern control continued until after the World War, but since then there has been an increasing transfer of Southern mills into the hands of Northern capitalists. This has been particularly true in South Carolina.<sup>19</sup> Some writers claim that 50 per cent of Southern mill stock is now owned in the North.<sup>20</sup> Broadus Mitchell and Paul Blanshard probably come nearer the truth when they say that Southern mills are still largely Southern-owned.<sup>21</sup>

A few of the owners and managers of Carolina cotton mills have remained with their plants since the turn of the century, but most of the entrepreneurs are younger men, the second generation of manufacturers. Frequently they are college-trained sons or sons-in-law of the builder.<sup>22</sup> The new owner is a business man.<sup>23</sup> Broadus Mitchell, who is a native Southerner, believes that the mill owner is neither philanthropic nor cleemosynary in character. The old spirit of the patrician has been displaced by a crude exploitation.<sup>24</sup>

As time has gone on, the desire for profit has outstripped that of service for its own sake, so much so that the latter is now only a gesture accompanying the former.<sup>25</sup>

W. J. Cash paints the mill owner of today in the darkest hues, calling him a "horse trader . . . totally incapable of the notion

<sup>15</sup> 158, p. 233, 146, p. 142, Murchison in 36, p. 30, 240, pp. 61-68. <sup>16</sup> 100, p. 19; 169, p. 233. <sup>17</sup> 264, p. 81. <sup>18</sup> 13, p. 4. <sup>19</sup> 256, p. 95, 240, pp. 60-61, 29. <sup>20</sup> 166, p. 7, 67, p. 451. Sinclair Lewis says that a very large per cent of Southern mills are owned in the North. 148, p. 14. <sup>21</sup> Mitchell in 52, p. 82, 21, pp. 5-6. <sup>22</sup> 257, pp. 117-119. <sup>23</sup> Melvin Thomas Copeland thinks that the Southerner is not as efficient as his New England competitor. 51, p. 49. <sup>24</sup> 173, p. 24; 178, pp. 4, 87-89, 254, p. 276, 125, p. 22. <sup>25</sup> 175, p. 484.

of *noblesse oblige*”<sup>26</sup> The other side of the coin is given by William P. Jacobs

No individual . . . who has lived in or visited with sufficient frequency the average cotton mill village of South Carolina, could ever be brought to believe that one who is so indispensable, so philanthropic, and so actuated by humanitarian ideals as is the cotton manufacturer of South Carolina, could ever be accused of anything that would injure the interests of his operatives<sup>27</sup>

Probably a middle ground between extreme denunciation and grandiloquent eulogy is nearer the truth

Village paternalism has remained with the passing of years The mill owner knows *his* people and is guarding their interests In true patriarchal fashion, one of the most distinguished mill men of South Carolina remarked “. . . I think we can manage their affairs better than they”<sup>28</sup> The manager knows what reading matter is good for the child-like minds of *his* operatives and selects it<sup>29</sup> He also discusses the operative’s personal problems in a man-to-man fashion, but the owner’s conclusions are usually reached<sup>30</sup>

As the mill owner has advanced in the economic and social scale, the chasm between him and the operative has widened<sup>31</sup> The emotional attitude of the earlier owners has been lost<sup>32</sup> Believing that any curtailment of their program would spell ruin to the South, the mill owners have convinced the Southern people of the righteousness of their cause<sup>33</sup> However, it is only human of them to glory in their position and prestige, especially since the whole community approves of them<sup>34</sup>

The thinking of the manufacturers, who are usually honest in their convictions and at times surprisingly liberal, has not been aided by some of their spokesmen<sup>35</sup> The trade journals have often painted a rosy picture of the cotton mill situation and have failed to give much space to the actual needs of the laborers and

<sup>26</sup> 38, p. 163    <sup>27</sup> 180, pp. 168-169 Clarence E. Cason remarks that the absence of labor union movements until recently is one indication of the humane attitude of the mill owners 40, p. 100    <sup>28</sup> 279, p. 126    <sup>29</sup> 114, I, 247  
Workers are reported to have been dismissed for reading certain issues of Raleigh, North Carolina, newspapers 259, pp. 203-204    <sup>30</sup> 249, p. 329, 100, pp. 213-214, 395-396  
<sup>31</sup> 38, pp. 164-166    <sup>32</sup> 172, p. 166    <sup>33</sup> 176, p. 490    <sup>34</sup> 176, pp. 497-498

<sup>35</sup> 232, pp. 4-5

the worst conditions existing in the villages <sup>36</sup> Moreover, the mill owner has been opposed to an impartial investigation of conditions in the industry Probably he has a right to refuse interference in his private affairs At any rate, the North Carolina Cotton Manufacturers' Association would not permit the Institute for Research in Social Science, an organization controlled by native Southerners at the University of North Carolina, to survey the industry <sup>37</sup> And the Cotton Manufacturers' Association of South Carolina put on a vast advertising campaign in 1929 to counteract the findings of the investigation made by the state legislature They issued a pamphlet called, "The Truth About the Cotton Mills of South Carolina," which is not the whole truth <sup>38</sup>

Carolina mill owners oppose any examination of their business affairs, most of all if it is done by "damnyankees" <sup>39</sup> The South still suffers from an inferiority complex and resents any slurs on the region <sup>40</sup> Many mills are small family affairs A man's business is his castle When aliens in the persons of labor agitators or uplifters come into his village, the owner feels

. . . much the same emotion that stirs within the plain man who observes a Gila monster in a zoo—he knows that it is unlawful to kill the thing, yet from the bottom of his soul he feels that it is contrary to reason and the natural rights of man to permit such a creature to live <sup>41</sup>

Even the Ministerial Letter, a document drawn up by Southern clergymen, which called for a consideration of some of the worst aspects of mill conditions, was severely criticized by the manufacturers <sup>42</sup>

The Carolina cotton mill workers have rarely blamed the owners for their troubles. It is the opinion of competent observers that the mill people have no feeling of enmity toward the manufacturers. They are generally regarded as friendly men who cannot help conditions <sup>43</sup> The fact is that the owners and workers have the same philosophy <sup>44</sup> W. J. Cash has put it fittingly in writing of the Southern mind <sup>45</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *21*, pp 80-85    <sup>37</sup> *55*, p. 322, *259*, pp 19-21, *21*, p 40    <sup>38</sup> This brochure contains editorials and letters which appeared in the newspapers of the state in 1929 All of these praise the mill owners *121*    <sup>39</sup> *167*, p 16, *21*, p 6, *33*, pp 165-166    <sup>40</sup> *41*, p 370    <sup>41</sup> *128*, p 219.    <sup>42</sup> *244*, pp 59-60, 168, pp 61-66.

<sup>43</sup> *155*, pp 74, 105, 136, *125*, p 21, *154*

<sup>44</sup> *178*, pp 218-221; *172*, pp. 168-169

<sup>45</sup> In the near future, W. J. Cash will publish a book on the Southern mind.



It is a mind . . . of the soil rather than of the mills—a mind . . . almost wholly unadjusted to the new industry . . . The very legend of the Old South . . . is warp and woof of the Southern mind . . . Everywhere he [the Southerner] turns away from reality to a gaudy world of his own making. . . The mind of the Southerner is an intensely individualistic mind . . . *Laissez faire* is its watchword. . . If, by a miracle, he [the mill hand] is ambitious, his aspirations run, not to improving his own status by improving that of the class to which, in reality, he is bound, but to gaudy visions of himself as a member of the master class, as superintendent or even president of the mills. His fellows may be damned. . .<sup>46</sup>

And Broadus Mitchell says that the average Southerner is "less aware of the need for justice between classes than the appropriateness of kindness shown by a superior to an inferior"<sup>47</sup> "The Southerner is ungiven to reflection . . . Everything is arranged by God, there is nothing to think about"<sup>48</sup> The weight of a static tradition and the preoccupation of able minds with the creative arts have resulted in an uncritical South.<sup>49</sup> Thus it is not strange that mill owners are generally supported by glowing tributes in the newspapers, the church magazines, and the fraternal journals.<sup>50</sup>

Possibly a lack of education in the outlook of the employer as well as of the employee is responsible for the bad spots in Carolina mill life.<sup>51</sup> Some of the outstanding mill owners know that there is something wrong with the industry and desire the opportunity to right it.<sup>52</sup>

#### THE EARNINGS OF THE INDUSTRY

In the past, cotton manufacturing in the Carolinas has enjoyed distinct advantages. Those most frequently cited are proximity to raw materials, abundance of water power, an inexhaustible supply of cheap labor, lower tax levies, favorable transportation rates, long hours of labor, favorable market conditions, lower construction costs, and satisfactory labor legislation.<sup>53</sup> Melvin Thomas Copeland points out that some of these claims are not supported by the facts. The freight saving is small, the supply of raw material is not always at hand, power is not very cheap, and

<sup>46</sup> 37, pp. 185, 187, 188. <sup>47</sup> 175, p. 490. <sup>48</sup> 37, p. 190. <sup>49</sup> 178, p. 276.

<sup>50</sup> There is evidence of a restiveness in certain quarters. 174, p. 129. <sup>51</sup> 178, pp. 23, 269. <sup>52</sup> 252, p. 1195, 133, pp. 592-594, 637-638. <sup>53</sup> 172, p. 170, 146, pp. 46, 96-97, 137, p. 235, 21, p. 33, 125, p. 22; 279, pp. 28-30.

many goods are not finished in the South <sup>54</sup> Taxes are being increased, also. It was common in the past for cities to offer a prospective mill tax exemptions for five years as an inducement. Now the Carolinas are boosting taxes on mill property. There is disagreement about the size of the tax rates. The owners and their spokesmen contend that the Carolina levies are higher than those of New England,<sup>55</sup> but a thorough student of the mill situation asserts that they are only slightly, if any, higher <sup>56</sup>

As has been previously indicated, the cost of manufacturing cotton goods has been considerably lower in the Carolinas than in New England. It is reasonable to conclude that the profits were large, but convincing evidence is not available <sup>57</sup> Victor S. Clark reports dividends of from 17 to 24 per cent in the 1880's. Other figures for the same period range from 30 to 75 per cent <sup>58</sup> D. A. Tompkins says that North Carolina mills made 15 per cent from 1880 to 1900 <sup>59</sup> A few dividends ranged from 40 to 60 per cent <sup>60</sup> For the earnings in the first decade of the twentieth century few data are available <sup>61</sup> Broadus Mitchell says that the average net profit of the best mills was between 10 and 30 per cent from 1889 to 1908 <sup>62</sup> During the World War the profits were very large.

But in the 1920's, when other industries were prospering, cotton textiles were generally depressed. During this period some corporations undoubtedly lost money. Others that made a profit used the failure of the less fortunate as a blind to hide their own successes <sup>63</sup> Dunn and Hardy state that Spartanburg, South Carolina, mills paid annual dividends from 1921 to 1926 of nearly 8 per cent. They say that fifty-five Southern mills, many of which are in the Carolinas, paid in 1927 dividends averaging 10.35 per cent on their net worth. In the following year the majority of Southern mills paid dividends of 7 and 8 per cent <sup>64</sup> Sixty-four companies in the South have had long, unbroken dividend records <sup>65</sup> In 1929 the president of one of the large corporations in South Carolina stated that a \$1,000,000 surplus existed in a corporation capital-

<sup>54</sup> 51, pp. 86-89    <sup>55</sup> 82, p. 9, 113    <sup>56</sup> 146, pp. 46-119    <sup>57</sup> 100, p. 8, 21, pp. 40-43    <sup>58</sup> 241, p. 281, 169, p. 265    <sup>59</sup> Cited by 254, p. 88    <sup>60</sup> 254, p. 88    <sup>61</sup> Gerald W. Johnson did write in 1923 that one corporation capitalized at \$100,000 issued \$1,500,000 in stock dividends in less than twenty years. 125, p. 20    <sup>62</sup> 169, p. 262.    <sup>63</sup> In 1921 a mill declared a dividend of 18 per cent, although a stockholder announced that it was losing money. 125, p. 20    <sup>64</sup> 65, p. 66    <sup>65</sup> 65, p. 69

ized at \$9,000,000, but actually worth \$15,000,000 <sup>66</sup> On the other hand, Bernard Cone says that the return from his vast interests in denims at Greensboro, North Carolina, was only 3 4 per cent from 1924 to 1929 <sup>67</sup> And one of the advertisements inserted in various state newspapers in 1929 by the Cotton Manufacturers' Association of South Carolina asserted that the earnings for the past few years on actual invested capital had averaged little more than 5 per cent It is contended that, except for the war period, the average for the industry of the state has been about 4 per cent <sup>68</sup> Claudius T Murchison writes in *King Cotton Is Sick* "Even before the general collapse of 1930, it is doubtful if more than one-half the southern mills were on a regular dividend basis for common stocks" <sup>69</sup>

Mill officials have been well paid Paul Blanshard asserts that salaries of \$75,000, \$60,000, and \$40,000 were received and that stipends of \$25,000 were common The president of the Brandon Corporation, Greenville, South Carolina, got \$37,000 yearly <sup>70</sup>

Although no final conclusions can be drawn, it appears that mills made considerable money in some years and lost in others, and the presidents and managers were well paid

#### TROUBLES IN TEXTILES

The Coolidge prosperity did not include the cotton textile industry either in the South or in New England

A careful study based upon the most authoritative data shows that during the past ten years 1,060 mills in the industry had a net deficit of more than \$100,000,000 after income tax payments <sup>71</sup>

After 1924 there was a severe depression in the mills at New Bedford and Fall River, Massachusetts, and a less acute one in the Southern cotton factories <sup>72</sup> While securities were doubling and trebling in other industries, cotton stocks were going in the opposite direction <sup>73</sup>

Claudius T. Murchison, a careful student of Southern economics, has found many complicating and debilitating features in cotton manufacturing Wide and frequent changes in the price of cotton make for instability When it is realized that the raw material

<sup>66</sup> 279, pp 127-128

<sup>67</sup> Cited by 259, p 300

<sup>68</sup> 121 <sup>69</sup> 183, p 32

<sup>70</sup> 247, 25, p 555, 279, p 129.

<sup>71</sup> 237, p 325

<sup>72</sup> Murchison in 36, pp 34-35

<sup>73</sup> 183, p 21

amounts to from one-third to two-thirds of the total cost of manufacturing cloth and that the price of this commodity fluctuates from 30 to 40 per cent in a single season, the magnitude of the factor of change becomes apparent. Mills usually buy on call, but some speculate on the exchange.<sup>74</sup> Changes in style form another problem.<sup>75</sup> Formerly there were some fairly standard counts in cotton cloth, but today not more than 20 per cent of the textile products can be regarded as staple. The rapidity of changes in such ordinary cloth as gingham and denims is amazing.<sup>76</sup> And the style changes in fine goods are kaleidoscopic. Thus the mills have periods of activity and months of idleness.<sup>77</sup> They rush to get a certain material made when they learn there is a sale for it. Overproduction and an accretion of unsold goods follow.<sup>78</sup> Unemployment, with the accompanying ills of short time and lay offs, further complicate the labor problem.<sup>79</sup> In 1931 more than one-half of the South Carolina mills operated irregularly.<sup>80</sup>

Furthermore, the character of cotton goods merchandising puzzles the expert in business management. Only rarely does a single organization do more than a small part of the processing. In cotton textiles there is a series of specialists. One-fourth of the mills are spinning mills. Their product is sold to yarn merchants. This selling is done on a speculative basis and causes additional insecurity. The majority of the mills do not finish their goods, consequently another group of specialists has charge of bleaching, dyeing, and printing. A converter acts as an intermediary between the mills which manufacture grey goods and the finishing plants. The converter is the stylist. Commission men normally sell coarse goods to converters. These commission men are interested only in moving goods and usually dictate the price on large orders. They have a strangle hold on the small mill.<sup>81</sup> Under such a system, there is small wonder that mills fail. And many of them have failed. Some mills have recently been sold at

<sup>74</sup> Murchison in 228, pp. 47-48, Murchison in 36, p. 39, 183, p. 71.

<sup>75</sup> While the short skirt and the new underwear have helped to depress the industry, they have not been an important influence. The per capita consumption of cotton goods in 1927 was about what it was in 1923. 183, pp. 3-5.

<sup>76</sup> 183, pp. 111-112, Murchison in 36, pp. 40-41. <sup>77</sup> 183, pp. 75, 113. <sup>78</sup> Cone in 259, pp. 302-304, 132, pp. 108-104. <sup>79</sup> 183, pp. 10-11. <sup>80</sup> 19, pp. 19-20.

<sup>81</sup> Summarized from Murchison in 36, pp. 36-38. Wilham R. Basset contends that 14 per cent of the elements which are common to the manufacturing and processing of cotton goods could be eliminated and 62 per cent greatly reduced. 15, p. 46.

from 10 to 20 per cent of then replacement value, and others have been quietly taken over by commission merchants <sup>82</sup>

A continual influx of unnecessary capital has also complicated the industry's problems. Successful plants have been enlarged without any thought of the public's ability to purchase <sup>83</sup> In order to operate his plant, the mill owner has reduced wages, run at night, and introduced "the stretch-out."

The way out of the economic tangle is neither clear nor easy. Friendly relations between capital and labor, improved management, and a lessening of regional competition may help the situation, but the outlook remains gloomy <sup>84</sup> Consolidations and co-operation are the basic means by which the industry can be revived. <sup>85</sup> Already a number of amalgamations and mergers have been effected. Some are horizontal; others are vertical <sup>86</sup>

The Cotton Textile Institute, <sup>87</sup> which has the support of 80 per cent of the industry, has been able to do something in the way of co-operation. This will help, but cannot bring a permanent cure <sup>88</sup>

#### THE LABOR SUPPLY

In the early days of the Carolina cotton textile manufacturing, labor was not plentiful <sup>89</sup> It was difficult to get people to come to the factories, for even then mill work was in bad repute. But the agricultural depression of the 1890's forced marginal farmers into the villages <sup>90</sup> The poor white people of the Piedmont were the first to come <sup>91</sup> As the industry expanded in the early years of the twentieth century, labor again became scarce. Scouts were sent to the mountains <sup>92</sup> So many were drawn in by the "self-heralded forerunner of the millennium" that some districts were almost depopulated. <sup>93</sup> These "whippers-in" told glowing tales of the mill village. They pictured a land "flowing with milk and honey" and talked about "money growing on trees." <sup>94</sup>

<sup>82</sup> 183, pp. 32, 65    <sup>83</sup> Muchison in 36, pp. 33-36    <sup>84</sup> 183, pp. 9, 46, 140, 214, Cone in 259, pp. 332-333    <sup>85</sup> Muchison in 36, p. 42, Muchison in 228, p. 66, 183, p. 158, 146, pp. 130-131, 15, pp. 45-46    <sup>86</sup> 146, pp. 129-131.

<sup>87</sup> For a study of the Cotton Textile Institute, see Sinnavsky, Boris Michael, "The Cotton Textile Institute, Inc., A Stabilizing Agency in the Cotton Textile Industry" 235    <sup>88</sup> 183, pp. 155-156    <sup>89</sup> 169, p. 198.    <sup>90</sup> 169, pp. 173, 193-194    <sup>91</sup> 223, p. 66    <sup>92</sup> 169, p. 208, 213, p. 31    <sup>93</sup> 213, p. 53, 34, p. 87.

<sup>94</sup> 153 Two trips of the German steamer *Wittkind* brought several hundred Belgians, Austrians, and Galicians to the Carolina cotton mills in 1906-1907. This experiment did not prove very satisfactory, and no other foreign labor has been used. 141, pp. 199-206; 213, p. 31

The situation has changed since the World War. The depression in agriculture has brought an oversupply of labor. Moreover, an overexpanded industry needs some paring down.<sup>95</sup>

The industry today has 30,000,000 spindles in place. One half that number, if operated six days a week without limitation on hours of operation, could supply a market equaling the 1929 consumer demand for cotton goods.<sup>96</sup>

"The stretch-out" has eliminated a considerable number of the remaining workers. It looks as though the mills will be able to man themselves with labor from their own and neighboring villages in the future.<sup>97</sup>

#### WORKING IN THE MILL

It may not take long to learn to run two sides of spinning or a few looms on coarse goods, but it takes many months to develop into a proficient spinner or weaver.<sup>98</sup> The work is monotonous.<sup>99</sup> The long, hard hours leave the operatives exhausted, and they throw themselves down on their porches when they come home at night.<sup>100</sup> Especially is it tiring in summer.<sup>101</sup> It is not uncommon to hear workers remark: "You sure do have to slave your life away at the mill and you get nothing for it, but there is nothing else for poor folks to do."<sup>102</sup> Even Harry Shumway, after painting an attractive picture of Southern cotton mill life, admits that the operatives work hard in the cotton mills.<sup>103</sup> Many years ago John Trotwood Moore lamented the destruction of frail human beings in the cotton factories.<sup>104</sup> But

All modern industry is like that. We who stand aside from it know nothing. . . It is only these women in this room, these boys, these young girls, these dim figures that come here in the dawn, stumbling along the streets of mill villages—some of the villages quite neat, well-built villages, with paved streets and flowers in the yard—others horrible enough—these people stumbling home at night filled with a weariness unknown to us who do not stand all day by these machines, these are the ones who know.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>95</sup> 168, p. 98    <sup>96</sup> 237, p. 223.    <sup>97</sup> 213, pp. 150-151    <sup>98</sup> 120, p. 58, 85, p. 1191    <sup>99</sup> 21, p. 10    <sup>100</sup> 155, pp. 118, 126, 135-136    <sup>101</sup> 155, p. 73    <sup>102</sup> 155, p. 74

<sup>103</sup> 233, p. 39    <sup>104</sup> 180, p. 39    <sup>105</sup> 4, p. 10

John Stevens . . . spoke to his looms, and knowing each part, spoke of them. He liked his machines . . . It's what they do to people . . . that makes me sick at heart.<sup>106</sup>

Sidney Lanier saw what the effects would be when he wrote

And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say *Go*  
*There's plenty that can, if you can't we know*  
*Move out, if you think you're underpaid*  
*The poor are prolific, we're not afraid,*  
*Trade is trade*<sup>107</sup>

There is a tragic romance in cotton mill machinery which has been caught by a number of writers. In the spinning room

There were over a hundred spindles on each side of the frame, each revolving with the rapidity of an incipient cyclone and snapping every now and then the delicate white thread that was spun out like spiders' web from the rollers and the cylinders, making a balloon-like gown of cotton thread, which settled continuously around the bobbins.<sup>108</sup>

The long rows of spindles in the spinning-room of the mill flew at terrific speed . . . Fingers of steel moved. There were in the mill hundreds of thousands of tiny steel fingers handling thread, handling cotton to make thread, handling thread to weave it into cloth.<sup>109</sup>

The machines were children who needed constant attention. In the summer the air in the room was stifling hot. The air was kept damp by the floating spray from above. Dark stains showed on the surface of the thin dresses. The girls ran restlessly up and down all day long.<sup>110</sup>

One is greeted in the weave room with

Clatter. Clatter. What a racket there is! There is a dancing—crazily, jerkily dancing—the loom dance.<sup>111</sup>

The weave room has a sound different from the other rooms. It's like the sound of a sinner's teeth grinding in hell.<sup>112</sup>

The mill lit up at night looks

. . . like a great ship pulling out across the pasture, with her engines pounding.<sup>113</sup>

In a cotton mill at night. You are working there. There is a roar of sound—a sustained roar—now low, now high—big sounds . . . little sounds. There is a singing—a shouting—a talking. There are whispers.

<sup>106</sup> 153, p. 258. <sup>107</sup> 33, p. 16. <sup>108</sup> 180, p. 263. <sup>109</sup> 3, p. 49. <sup>110</sup> 3, p. 52-53. <sup>111</sup> 3, p. 286. <sup>112</sup> 153, p. 219. <sup>113</sup> 272, p. 326.

There is laughter Thread laughs It whispers It runs softly and swiftly. It leaps. Thread is like a young goat on the mountains of the moon Thread is like a little hair snake running into a hole It runs softly and swiftly. Looms in a cotton mill are like baby elephants playing with mother elephants in a forest . . . Machines dance They dance on their iron legs They sing, whisper, groan, laugh <sup>114</sup>

## CHILD LABOR

In the first decade of the present century, a great furor over child labor in Southern cotton mills arose in the North Senator Albert J Beveridge was particularly outspoken on the issue and was instrumental in securing a government investigation <sup>115</sup> In the South, Edgar Gardner Murphy and A J McKelway were champions of child rights. The Columbia, South Carolina, *State* also took up the cause <sup>116</sup> As a result of this agitation, a child labor law has been enacted in each state.

The child labor menace has never existed in any appreciable degree in Southern cotton mills.<sup>117</sup> In his government investigation, Thomas Robinson Dawley, Jr, revealed that much false propaganda had been spread After visiting mills all over the Carolinas, he reported that he saw no child doing heavy tasks and believed that children were being given an opportunity to escape from frightful conditions on the farm <sup>118</sup> More recently, Paul Blanshard says that child labor is not a problem in the Southern cotton mill. Northern and Western states have about the same percentage of children working in cotton mills as the Southern states.<sup>119</sup> In 1927 the workers under sixteen years of age in South Carolina mills numbered less than one-half of one per cent <sup>120</sup>

In this connection, it should be pointed out that the Southern Puritan believes that work is a good, in fact, "the great morality was to go to work."<sup>121</sup> The child belongs to the parent until he is twenty-one years old They may do with him as they desire He should be put to work at fourteen years of age to keep him out of "devilment." And there is ample evidence to show that the parents, and not the mill officials, are responsible for children working at early ages.<sup>122</sup> Apparently there has been little concern

<sup>114</sup> 3, p 282    <sup>115</sup> 61, pp 1-7    <sup>116</sup> 55, pp 316-317, 178, p 11    <sup>117</sup> Child labor was much more common in the early days than now 178, p 251

<sup>118</sup> 61    <sup>119</sup> 21, pp 11-12    <sup>120</sup> 240, p 65    Census figures question some of the conclusions in this paragraph    <sup>121</sup> 169, p 95    <sup>122</sup> 155, p 20, 21, pp 13-15, 223, p 204.



over young people working in the factories. The idea of exploitation rarely entered people's minds.<sup>123</sup> In the early days "the use of children was not avarice, . . . but philanthropy; not exploitation, but generosity and co-operation and social-mindedness."<sup>124</sup>

#### NIGHT WORK

Before the textile code was instituted, the Southern cotton mills had been operating fifty-five and sixty hours a shift with the machinery running from 110 to 144 hours a week.<sup>125</sup> A study of 192 South Carolina cotton mills in 1932 shows that women were employed on night work in 39 per cent of the reporting plants. The large majority of these mills ran fifty-five hours a week on the night shift.<sup>126</sup> One-fourth of the South Carolina mills report operating more than 110 hours a week in one or more departments in 1932.<sup>127</sup> Professor Murchison says that half the mills habitually operate at night or are ready to do so.<sup>128</sup> This working at night, which became common during the World War, is one of the chief ills of cotton manufacturing. Although its elimination would not solve the fundamental problems of the industry, it would improve conditions and prohibit the working of women at unnatural hours.<sup>129</sup> Harold Hatch, Henry P. Kendall, W. D. Anderson, and other leading mill men have denounced the evil. But they are powerless, as long as their competitors run at night.<sup>130</sup> Of course, the reason for the increase in night work is the desire to cut overhead expenses. But the larger the number of mills running at night, the smaller becomes the advantage. After careful study, Professor Murchison concludes that the banning of night work would certainly help the industry.<sup>131</sup>

#### THE STRETCH-OUT

"The stretch-out," which was generally introduced into Carolina mills during 1920, has caused more discussion than any other

<sup>123</sup> 228, p. 204      <sup>124</sup> 169, p. 95      <sup>125</sup> 161, p. 40

<sup>126</sup> 19, p. 8. On account of the depression in textiles, the actual number of hours worked in the Carolina mills was less than in the New England plants.

<sup>127</sup> 19, p. 11      <sup>128</sup> 183, p. 146

<sup>129</sup> 279, p. 73. Night work by children is prohibited in the Carolinas, but South Carolina permits them to work until 9 o'clock to make up for the loss through accidents to machinery. Pipkin in 52, p. 637.

<sup>130</sup> 244, p. 60      <sup>131</sup> 183, pp. 151-152

one phase of mill work.<sup>132</sup> This device has usually been applied in the weave room, but it has also spread to the card and spinning rooms. Under the old system a weaver on the average coarse goods ran from twenty-four to thirty-six looms. He did all of the work incident to weaving except putting in the warp, laying up the filling, and repairing broken looms. Under "the stretch-out" a number of jobs have been taken from him and given to a cheaper worker. A boy puts the filling in the batteries, and the cloth is taken from all the looms in one room by a single man. The weaver does nothing but watch the looms, and the number he tends has been increased to forty-eight, sixty, seventy-six, one hundred, one hundred and ten, and in one case to one hundred and eighteen.<sup>133</sup> Sometimes this "stepping-up" has been accompanied by the installation of new machinery, but usually the old looms have been kept.<sup>134</sup> Formerly a woman ran from six to ten sides of spinning. Now with a cleaner she handles from twelve to twenty.<sup>135</sup> Ten years ago a man ran six frames of drawing in the card room. Now he has ten.<sup>136</sup> Although the system sometimes gives more money to the skilled weaver or spinner, it gives less to the average worker, who becomes a battery-filler or frame-cleaner.<sup>137</sup> But the worst feature about "the stretch-out" is that the worker cannot run the number of machines assigned. "I can run as many of them Draper looms as any man, but nobody can run seventy-two of them," said a skilled weaver in the Abbeville Cotton Mills.<sup>138</sup> The frantic rushing about in the factories today contrasts with the steady work of a decade ago.<sup>139</sup> Women have been forced to give up weaving.<sup>140</sup> People have fainted under the strain, and others have become sick.<sup>141</sup> Vernon B. Allen, organizer for the United Textile Workers, says that "the stretch-out" did more for the union than all the organizers could have done in twenty years.<sup>142</sup>

Apropos of "the stretch-out" and its results, it should be remarked that there has been considerable debate over the possibility of the crude mountaineer and the ignorant tenant farmer becoming a skilled worker in textiles.<sup>143</sup> Ben F. Lemert, in a

<sup>132</sup> 178, pp 191-192      <sup>133</sup> 178, pp 15-16, 265, pp 700-701, Kendall in 228, p. 8, 3, p 284, 279, pp 55, 75

<sup>134</sup> Kendall in 228, p 8, 84, p 679      <sup>135</sup> 2, p 698, 142      <sup>136</sup> 143, p. 687

<sup>137</sup> Come in 259, pp 313-316      <sup>138</sup> 211      <sup>139</sup> 32, p. 273.      <sup>140</sup> 153, p 329

<sup>141</sup> 153, p 330      <sup>142</sup> 271, p. 25.      <sup>143</sup> 262, pp 251-253.

recent study, states that Southern labor has not been as proficient as Northern <sup>144</sup> On the other hand, Frank T. de Vyver thinks that the Southern worker has become an efficient laborer and can manage machines which manufacture fine goods.<sup>145</sup>

The settlement of the argument over "the stretch-out" is not yet at hand. The Institute of Human Relations at Yale University has been studying the problem for some years, but no final report has been made <sup>146</sup> A recent mimeograph form from the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor states that "it is very difficult to set by law any general limit as to the number of looms that a weaver can operate in a cotton mill. The variations . . . in work . . . differ in each plant."<sup>147</sup> Scientific measurement in each mill appears to be the only possible solution to the problem.<sup>148</sup>

#### WORKING CONDITIONS

Within the mill building there often are primitive arrangements. An investigation of most of the cotton mills in South Carolina revealed many unsatisfactory conditions. One hundred and thirty-five of the plants studied had no hot water, one hundred and sixteen no towels, ninety-nine no soap, and ten no facilities at all for washing. Only thirty-six plants had any sort of cloak rooms. There was insufficient toilet space in forty-five mills. Drinking facilities were fairly adequate: seventy-nine out of ninety-nine plants had bubble fountains. All too frequently the doors in the plants open inward instead of outward. Glaring unshaded lights are common, and there are too few lights. Seating arrangements have not been provided in more than one-third of the mills, and these are usually inadequate <sup>149</sup> Neither of the Carolinas requires that all dangerous machinery be encased <sup>150</sup> Unguarded belts are common. Ventilation is usually inadequate in Carolina mills.<sup>151</sup> Excessive heat and humidity, which account for a large amount of bronchitis, further complicate the problem. And the dust and lint, which are about as well cared for here as in any cotton mills, cause a much greater proportion of tuberculosis than is prevalent among the non-mill population <sup>152</sup> The physical appearance of mill workers documents the statistics. A committee appointed by

<sup>144</sup> 146, pp. 81-91.

<sup>145</sup> 266, pp. 1322-1323.

<sup>146</sup> 119.

<sup>147</sup> 217. <sup>148</sup> 217. <sup>149</sup> 278, pp. 54-58, 61-63, 64-67, 69. <sup>150</sup> Pipkin in 52,

p. 649. <sup>151</sup> 278, pp. 55-57. <sup>152</sup> 278, pp. 52, 55; 65, p. 144.

the South Carolina legislature to investigate conditions in mills in 1920 found many violations of the labor laws. The commission which was charged with the enforcement of the law, had excused second, third, and even fifth offenses.<sup>153</sup> There can be little question that the serious study of working conditions in Carolina cotton mills is a crying need.

#### SOCIAL LEGISLATION

It is to the credit of certain cotton mill men in South Carolina that the work week was shortened to fifty-five hours, that the Saturday half-holiday was instituted, and that some other necessary legislation was enacted. But aside from these rather obvious demands of justice, about the only sort of welfare work provided by law is the care of the poor and the aged.<sup>154</sup> In social legislation North Carolina has gone considerably further than her sister state. A state-wide county welfare program, which is well organized and competently staffed, is doing some creditable work.<sup>155</sup> The latter state also has a child welfare commission.<sup>156</sup> Both the Carolinas require compulsory attendance at school up to the fourteenth year. In South Carolina the compulsory minimum is eighty days and can be made to cover the entire session, if the qualified electors so vote. In North Carolina the pupil must attend for the entire period during which the school is open.<sup>157</sup> But it is common knowledge that the compulsory attendance laws are not strictly enforced in the Carolinas. Neither of the states makes provision for pensioning the aged unless they are Confederate War veterans. Usually the old folks in Southern mill villages live with their children or at the county home. Generally they do not suffer.<sup>158</sup> Many return to the farms and try to eke out a living on the soil.<sup>159</sup> North Carolina has a fairly satisfactory workmen's compensation law, but South Carolina is one of the few states which have not enacted such legislation.<sup>160</sup> And the latter state is one of the few in the Union which give no aid to indigent mothers. The mother's pension law in North Carolina is supported by local and state funds.<sup>161</sup> In the Carolinas a woman may work

<sup>153</sup> 279, p. 8    <sup>154</sup> 213, pp. 132-140    <sup>155</sup> Herring in 48, p. 74    <sup>156</sup> Pipkin in 52, p. 662    <sup>157</sup> Pipkin in 52, p. 658    <sup>158</sup> 17, pp. 111-112    <sup>159</sup> 100, pp. 215-217.    <sup>160</sup> Pipkin in 52, pp. 649-651. On July 17, 1935, the governor of South Carolina signed a rather unsatisfactory workmen's compensation act which had been passed by the legislature    <sup>161</sup> Pipkin in 52, pp. 662-665

ten hours a day in the cotton mills <sup>162</sup> Both of the states have seating laws, but investigations reveal that they are not enforced.<sup>163</sup> The age limits of the working laws are very low. Children between fourteen and sixteen years of age may work ten hours a day. And South Carolina does not require any certification of physical fitness <sup>164</sup> The average Carolinian does not think in terms of social welfare, thus it is not strange that violations of laws are condoned. That poor children will be permitted to work illegally is to be expected.<sup>165</sup>

#### NEGRO LABOR

Southerners are agreed that the Southland is and shall remain a white man's country. This "is the cardinal test of a Southerner and the central theme of Southern history."<sup>166</sup> The Negro does not work in the mills at the same jobs as white folks, in fact, in 1920 there were only 2,817 Negroes employed in all cotton mills in North Carolina and only 3,075 in the factories of South Carolina <sup>167</sup> They are scrubbers, sweepers, firemen, truckers, and draymen. Some Negroes work on the dirtier machines in the card room <sup>168</sup>

The Negro slave was used in a number of ante-bellum mills. The Saluda factory near Columbia, South Carolina, employed 158 slaves in 1851 <sup>169</sup> Governor D. R. Williams found them satisfactory laborers in his Society Hill, South Carolina, mill <sup>170</sup> Since the Civil War the most notable experiment with Negro mill labor was at Concord, North Carolina. In the early part of the present century, Negroes were put in charge of machines with white overseers, but the experiment proved unsuccessful. Attempts made in Charleston to use Negro labor in mills also failed <sup>171</sup> However, for some years Negroes have been working in knitting mills in Durham, North Carolina.<sup>172</sup> Needless to say, the poor white now in the village does not cherish the idea of competition with the Negro. He will resist with bloodshed any attempts to put the black beside him in the factories <sup>173</sup> This feeling, among many others, will defeat any attempts of the Communist Party to gain a foothold in Southern cotton mill villages.

<sup>162</sup> Pipkin in 52, p. 605    <sup>163</sup> Pipkin in 52, pp. 665-666    <sup>164</sup> Pipkin in 52, pp. 655-657    <sup>165</sup> 74, pp. 5-6    <sup>166</sup> 208, p. 31    <sup>167</sup> 229, p. 798    <sup>168</sup> 120, p. 38    <sup>169</sup> 169, pp. 209-212, 168, p. 16    <sup>170</sup> 49, p. 151    <sup>171</sup> 169, pp. 216-217    <sup>172</sup> 28, pp. 125-126    <sup>173</sup> 8, 197, p. 35

## DISCONTENT AND UNIONISM

The Carolina promoter has advertised Piedmont mill labor as the most contented on earth. This was largely true before the World War <sup>174</sup> But even then there were evidences that all was not well in the village Lois Macdonald found dissatisfaction when she was gathering material for her *Southern Mill Hills* <sup>175</sup> The high labor turnover at that time is evidence of some discontent Furthermore, the labor uprisings, some of them leaderless strikes, were "surface manifestations of the existence of highly unsatisfactory labor conditions in the mills concerned" <sup>176</sup> Writing in January, 1930, Lois Macdonald, a native South Carolinian, says.

As a matter of fact, the rôle of labor agitator in the present struggle is incidental The strikes in Tennessee and the Carolinas are symptoms that reveal a deep-seated and almost universal discontent, of which Gastonia, Elizabethton, and Marion are merely the focal points <sup>177</sup>

And Paul Blanshard reports

. . . a great deal of discontent with low wages throughout the Southern mill villages. It is the one sore topic of conversation <sup>178</sup>

Trade unionism has existed in the South for a long time <sup>179</sup> The Knights of Labor came in the 1880's, and a few strikes occurred in the Carolinas and Georgia during that decade <sup>180</sup> The early years of the twentieth century brought the International Union of Textile Workers, which was later merged with the United Textile Workers <sup>181</sup> Unions spread here and there over the Carolinas, and men were discharged for holding memberships. But not a great deal was heard of unionism until 1913 At that time a new campaign for members was inaugurated by the United Textile Workers. In 1914 there were several strikes, of which the International Workers of the World walk-out in Greenville, South Carolina, was the most notable One thousand United Textile members were reported around Anderson and Greenville, South Carolina, in 1915. In the fall of that year, strikes occurred at

<sup>174</sup> 141, pp 28-31, 151      <sup>175</sup> 197, p 68, 156, p 208      <sup>176</sup> 229, pp 787-788

<sup>177</sup> 156, p 208.      <sup>178</sup> 21, p 18

<sup>179</sup> There are short sketches of the history of trade unionism in the South in Carson, Wilham J., *The Coming of Industry to the South*, pp 182-187, 36, and Mitchell, Broadus and Mitchell, George Sinclair, *The Industrial Revolution in the South*, pp. 180-183. <sup>178</sup> <sup>180</sup> 178, pp 180-181; 179, p. 23      <sup>181</sup> 178, pp. 180-181.

Anderson, Greenville, Columbia, and Westminster, South Carolina. Practically all these early strikes were unsuccessful. The next major trouble came in 1919. A refusal of the demand for a shorter work week and higher wages resulted in strikes in Charlotte, North Carolina, and the Horse Creek Valley, South Carolina. The year after the World War the union membership increased steadily, amounting, it is claimed, to forty thousand in North Carolina and five thousand in South Carolina. But strikes had ceased to occur by 1920. Already the depression in textiles had come. Wages were cut again and again, in some cases as much as 50 per cent. Finally the United Textile Workers called a strike for June 1, 1921. Nine thousand workers at Huntersville, Charlotte, Concord, and Kannapolis, in North Carolina, and Rock Hill, South Carolina, walked out. The strike was broken late in August, and the leaders were not re-employed. This was one of the largest strike ever called in the South, and it did show, even though it failed, that collective action is possible under adverse conditions. But hardly a healthy union remained in the South at the end of the year. The next important event in the labor history of the Carolinas occurred in 1927. In that year Alfred Hoffman founded the Piedmont Organizing Council, which included a number of crafts besides textiles.

In 1929 "the stretch-out," combined with long hours and low wages, precipitated the major strikes.<sup>182</sup> Conditions had become so intolerable that people rose up in leaderless protest.<sup>183</sup> Since the strikes at Gastonia<sup>184</sup> and Marion,<sup>185</sup> North Carolina, excited nation-wide interest, it will not be necessary here to do more than indicate the chief events. Fred Beal, an organizer for the National Textile Workers Union, was in and around Gastonia in the early months of 1929. On the second of April several members of the union which had been organized were discharged from the Loray Mill.<sup>186</sup> About two thousand walked out, and many are said to

<sup>182</sup> Summarized from 179, pp. 32-67. The investigating committee of the South Carolina legislature blamed underpay and overwork for the strikes. Competent observers do not believe that outside agitation caused the trouble. 178, pp. 150, 170. <sup>183</sup> 186

<sup>184</sup> For a detailed discussion of the strike, see Hood, Robin, "The Loray Mill Strike" 111, and Dunne, Wm. F., "Gastonia, Citadel of the Class Struggle" 66. <sup>185</sup> 148

<sup>186</sup> There had already been discontent over the manner in which the "stretch-out" had been introduced into the mill. 111, p. 173.

have joined the National Textile Workers Union. The strike lasted a little more than two weeks, but the mills were not back in full operation for some time. The Gastonia strike is distinctive for its Communist leadership. Under such a banner it was foredoomed to failure.<sup>187</sup> The climax of the struggle came with the killing of Sheriff Aderholdt. At this point, the righteous indignation of a fundamentalist community rose up, and prompted men to commit acts of violence, greatly to their discredit, and generally to disregard the bill of rights.<sup>188</sup>

A newspaper correspondent put the community feeling in appropriate language:

To the resident Gastonian there is but one issue. By all the sacred bugs and beasts of Ancient Egypt he is determined that no organization which denies God, defies the American flag, and makes a mock marriage shall gain a foothold among 18,000 of the "most contented workers" in the country. All else about the industrial disagreement is as a snowflake upon the river.<sup>189</sup>

The trials and convictions growing out of the Gastonia strike are a blot on the name of a state that has been the most progressive in the South.

The Marion strike began on July 11, 1929. The issues were shorter hours and the reinstatement of discharged unionists. The strike lasted nine weeks, and during part of the time 1,650 people were out. The United Textile Workers, a conservative affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, was the union interested in this trouble. But Alfred Hoffman, who was one of the chief figures in the strike, was rather intemperate and tactless in some of his actions. In all likelihood, his militancy precipitated the casualties. A temporary settlement of the strike came with the reinstatement of union members and the shortening of the work week. But discrimination against union men was asserted, and a second strike was called on October 1. Shots exchanged between the pickets and the officials of the law resulted in the death of six strikers and the wounding of fifteen others. Alfred Hoffman and the other leaders were tried and convicted.<sup>190</sup> A newspaper man has characterized all the strike trials briefly

<sup>187</sup> A careful student of the Loray Mill strike says that the Southern workers left the union once the connection with the Communist Party was clearly demonstrated. *III*, p. 174.

<sup>188</sup> *179*, p. 72. <sup>189</sup> Cited by *138*, p. 45. <sup>190</sup> *179*, pp. 75-78.



. every person charged with committing crimes against strikers was acquitted, while every case in which strikers were defendants, if it reached the jury, resulted in a verdict of "guilty."<sup>101</sup>

More significant than the Gastonia and Marion debacles were the many leaderless strikes of 1929 in South Carolina. A bitter strike occurred at Ware Shoals, and at Pelzer twelve hundred were out. The workers of the Greenville and Woodruff plants of the Brandon Corporation were on strike in the spring of 1929.<sup>102</sup> Anderson, Central, and Union mill workers also went on leaderless strikes. At the peak of these 1929 strikes from seventeen to eighteen thousand people walked out.<sup>103</sup> The operatives were protesting against unsatisfactory working conditions, and, in most of the plants, were unorganized.<sup>104</sup> When the smoke of the labor battles had cleared, it was found that the worst features of "the stretch-out" had been modified and that the strikers had won some victories.<sup>105</sup>

Since the 1929 strikes a number of changes have occurred. Workers have become more accustomed to striking, and Southern communities have grown more tolerant of unionism.<sup>106</sup> The manner in which the strikers conducted themselves has been partially responsible for the sympathetic attitude of the community. "They exhibited courage, patience, self-respect, orderliness and a sense of justice."<sup>107</sup> The South Carolina strikers opened their meetings with prayer, no bootleggers were allowed, and a guard was established to protect mill property.<sup>108</sup> The comment of George Sinclair Mitchell is worthy of note:

This whole series of spontaneous strikes was remarkable for the orderliness of the operatives, their prompt arranging for negotiations with the employers, the absence of important union organization, the willingness of employers to treat with strikers, and the frequency of partial victories.<sup>109</sup>

In the past the obstacles to textile unionism in the South have been insurmountable. Probably the strongest was the opposition of the employer. Few owners have tolerated unionism, and, when necessary, they have used their power as overlords to wipe out all

<sup>101</sup> 129, p. 319    <sup>102</sup> 279, p. 113, 179, pp. 79-80    <sup>103</sup> 179, pp. 79-80, 178, p. 16    <sup>104</sup> 220, pp. 780-787    <sup>105</sup> Mitchell in 52, p. 635    <sup>106</sup> 179, pp. 81-83  
<sup>107</sup> Mitchell in 52, p. 90. Sinclair Lewis found the Marion strikers earnest and stubborn, and saw no drinking of corn "likker." 148, pp. 15-16    <sup>108</sup> 25, pp. 554-555.    <sup>109</sup> 179, p. 80

traces of organization.<sup>200</sup> Then the individualistic and conservative background of the worker, which has been discussed elsewhere, has kept him from co-operating with his fellows for mutual benefit.<sup>201</sup> Southern public opinion has been strongly opposed to unionism and striking. While there are evidences of a modification in this attitude,<sup>202</sup> still the average Southerner, even the mill worker himself, looks on unionism with a certain loathing. It is something with which no "nice person" will be associated. Although there are exceptions, generally speaking, the local, state, and civil authorities, the home, the church, the school, and the press are against the labor organizer.<sup>203</sup> Poor leadership is another cause of the failure of unionism.<sup>204</sup> Furthermore, the United Textile Workers has always been a weak union. A small membership and financial difficulties have beset their path. And they are the only national union which can gain a foothold in the South. Some regional unions, such as the Piedmont Organizing Council and the Southern Industrial League, have made considerable advances, but the local organizations merely weaken the national efforts.<sup>205</sup>

Other factors which have militated against unionism are the semi-skilled character of the industry, the large number of women and children workers, the depression in textiles, the reserve labor supply, the poverty of the Southern worker, the failure of the union to enroll the best elements in the villages, the partisan propaganda of the mills, the presence of the Negro, and the non-indigenous character of the movement.<sup>206</sup>

#### THE YOUNG MILL WORKERS

But regardless of many deterrents, changes are taking place "on the hill." The young workers have been in the village all their lives, they do not know the individualism of agriculture. Moreover, they are better educated than their parents. Many

<sup>200</sup> 195; 197, pp 28-29, 124, p 647, 279, p 126, Cone in 259, pp 194-209, 155, pp 112-115, 178, pp 182-184, 102, pp 353-356, 179, p 84, 218

<sup>201</sup> 102, p. 354, 229, pp 802-803, 6, p 977, 218

<sup>202</sup> 179, p 88, 279, pp. 118, 142, Herring in 48, p 77

<sup>203</sup> Herring in 48, p 77, 264, pp 31-35, 229, pp 806-807, 178, pp. 183-184, 108, pp 7-8, 270, pp 252-253

<sup>204</sup> 179, pp 86-87; 178, pp 184-187, 104, p 313

<sup>205</sup> 175, pp 487-488

<sup>206</sup> 178, pp. 184-187, 6, pp 976-977, 175, pp 487-489, 155, p 75; 179, pp 84-89; 102, pp 353-356, 1, 229.

went across the sea in the World War <sup>207</sup> They returned saying that it "wuz a rich man's war 'n a poor man's fight" <sup>208</sup> These veterans saw much of life beyond their hillsides during the War years They know how people live in other parts of the world, and they are not so ready to accept their lot without complaint <sup>209</sup> The fact is that a new mill worker is in our midst, a worker who is unacquainted with Negro competition, cares nothing for tradition, and is restless and questioning <sup>210</sup> He is beginning to "inquire into the meaning of things" <sup>211</sup> With a more intelligent and better trained mind than his ancestors, he is reading newspapers, magazines, and books. The radio and the movie add to his learning <sup>212</sup> He hears of higher wages and shorter hours elsewhere, and he wonders. <sup>213</sup> And his number is not small There are proportionately more young workers in North Carolina cotton mills than in any other industry Jennings J Rhyne says that the mean age of Gaston County, North Carolina, mill workers is about thirty years <sup>214</sup> What will happen when these people open their eyes and suddenly see in the worst villages what one writer has described as

. . . the heaps of rotten lumber they live in, the grubby food they eat; their idiots and malborn; their native stock that cannot read a newspaper or sign its own name, their masma of religious buncombe and racial prejudices black enough to blot out the sun, their bull ring of meaningless days: sunrise to sunset the same drudgery <sup>215</sup>

Undoubtedly their world has been turned upside down by the late War, the strikes, and the "new light" The mill workers are developing a class consciousness and coming to believe that unionism is the way to salvation <sup>216</sup> While they may not yet be able to understand the fundamentals of economic law, they are thinking and talking. There is an optimism which is well expressed in *Mull Shadows*, a play by Tom Tippet Hogan replies to a question from a newspaper reporter regarding the strike.

<sup>207</sup> 154; 120, p 39    <sup>208</sup> 155, p 71, 197, p 27    <sup>209</sup> 154; 99, pp 1322-1326

<sup>210</sup> 192, p. 264, 38, p 167, 123, p 227, Herring in 52, pp 352-360, 109, 83  
Many observers see a real sentiment for unionism And even before 1929, Jennings J Rhyne found that about half of the Gaston workers favored unions    223, pp 205-206; 224, pp 134-135

<sup>211</sup> 192, p 264    <sup>212</sup> 105, p. 267    <sup>213</sup> 112    <sup>214</sup> 223, p 86.    <sup>215</sup> 205, p 9

<sup>216</sup> 178, pp 19, 149, 67, p 451; 197, p 47, 109, 154 The tendency to employ college-trained men and the static condition of the industry will keep the natural leaders in the ranks of the workers in the future.

In one way, hit air all lost, miz, but in 'nother way 'taint. We learnt a heap this summer. We know whar we stand now. Somethin' got in our blood, an' that hain't out yit. Hit'll all come out again. Maybe in the spring when the sap comes up in the trees, we'll fight agam, an' different, too.<sup>217</sup>

#### THE NEW DEAL

When President Roosevelt called for codes from industry, the manufacturers of cotton textiles were the first to submit a program. It is natural that the industry should have been ready with a plan.<sup>218</sup> The long depression in textiles had caused the regional associations and the Cotton Textile Institute to urge co-operative action for many years. The selfishness of certain individuals had defeated the efforts of the more intelligent and far-sighted leaders, but the government was able to compel what private enterprise could not accomplish.

Under the "Code of Fair Competition for the Cotton Textile Industry" (as amended November 8, 1933), many long desired improvements were made. A minimum wage of \$12 a week with no reduction in wages above this figure, which existed prior to the operation of the code, was set. The minimum working age was placed at sixteen years. Machines could run two shifts amounting to eighty hours, but no operative was allowed to work more than forty hours. The industry was not permitted to expand. A Cotton Textile Industry Committee, which was to become the self-governing agency for textiles, gathered data upon the condition of the industry. Unhindered collective bargaining was permitted. Employee ownership of mill villages was to be considered. All disputes between capital and labor were to be appealed to a plant, state, or national relations board, whose ruling was final.<sup>219</sup>

With the coming of the New Deal, the cotton mills ran more regularly than they had in many years. Money in the pockets of the impoverished workers looked good. "It's a new land. There is some hope now. The NRA means everything to the mill workers."<sup>220</sup> And the owner was glad to see some profits, even though he was forced to pay 70 per cent more for his labor and 30 to 45 per cent more for raw cotton.<sup>221</sup>

While employers did not always abide by the wage scales and

<sup>217</sup> 258, p. 52      <sup>218</sup> 237, p. 321      <sup>219</sup> 44, 45.      <sup>220</sup> 5, p. 8.      <sup>221</sup> 237, pp. 324-325

the collective bargaining clauses of the code,<sup>222</sup> statistical evidence indicates that the minimum scales did not become maximum wages.<sup>223</sup> However, intermittent strikes here and there throughout the Carolinas in the fall of 1933 and the winter of 1934 attest to misunderstandings and violations of good faith. George L. Googe, an American Federation of Labor representative, stated in August, 1933, that no Southern mill with which he was acquainted was living up to the code as signed by President Roosevelt.<sup>224</sup> On the other hand, those mills which did attempt to follow the agreement were compelled to see that their competitors kept the rules of the industry. The fact is that neither capital nor labor desired to return to the chaos of the depression and pre-depression eras.<sup>225</sup>

Undoubtedly, wide gains were made by the United Textile Workers during the period that the code was in effect. The social stigmas are disappearing from unionism, and the people have come to believe in co-operative action more than heretofore.<sup>226</sup>

The short day, high wages, and collective bargaining clauses of the textile code destroyed the Southern manufacturers' differential.<sup>227</sup> In the future, it is not likely that mills will move South, and there will be little expansion. Indeed, the industry could supply the consumer market of 1929 if it operated half the spindles in place for a six-day week without limitation of hours.<sup>228</sup>

In its decision of May, 1935, the Supreme Court of the United States found the National Industrial Recovery Act to be unconstitutional. Although this decision invalidated the textile code, many of the social and economic gains of the cotton mill workers have been retained. A few mills have returned to practices common before the New Deal, but generally the plants have not re-employed child labor and have kept the shorter hours and higher wages.

As a part of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, a processing tax of 4 2 cents a pound was levied upon cotton spinning. This tax, which became effective August 1, 1933, placed a heavy burden upon the textile industry, since higher-priced cotton goods could not be sold. Some mills attempted to offset this added expense by introducing more scientific means of production. Workers responded to the "stretching-out" by protests and "walk-outs." However, the unfortunate strikes of 1935 have not aided

<sup>222</sup> 149, p. 234    <sup>223</sup> 237, p. 323    <sup>224</sup> 71, p. 75    <sup>225</sup> 184, pp. 8-12  
<sup>226</sup> 184, p. 11    <sup>227</sup> 184, p. 10    <sup>228</sup> 237, p. 323

the cause of unionism. Recently many "friendship associations," which are mill-dominated closed shops, have been formed. With the elimination of the processing tax, which came with the invalidation of the Agricultural Adjustment Act by the United States Supreme Court in January, 1936, cotton textile manufacturing should become more prosperous.

## Chapter Five

### A REGIONAL PLAN

#### THE NEW SECTIONALISM AND REGIONALISM

THERE are in the South today two groups who are thinking of reconstructing the section by different means. The philosophy of one of these is called the "new sectionalism." That of the other is "regionalism." The fundamental tenets of these schools will be explained.

In the Virginia Convention which ratified the federal constitution, Patrick Henry remarked that "there is a striking difference, and great contrariety of interests, between the states."<sup>1</sup> The late Frederick Jackson Turner wrote in 1907

the influence of the diverse physiographic provinces which make up the nation will become more marked. They will exercise sectionalizing influences, tending to mould society to their separate conditions, in spite of all the countervailing tendencies toward national uniformity.<sup>2</sup>

In 1922 he held the same opinion.

We in America are in reality a federation of sections rather than of states. . . . In political matters the states act in groups rather than as individual members of the Union. They act in sections and are responsive to the respective interests and ideals of these sections.<sup>3</sup>

Professor Turner has given a detailed explanation of the sectional character of our history, particularly from the political point of view, in *The Significance of Sections in American History*, which was published in 1924.<sup>4</sup>

Within the past decade there has arisen in the South a group of scholars who have led a movement toward a more acute sectionalism. The chief figures in this revival are some Nashville writers and critics. These able young Southerners have become known as "agrarians," a name which is derived from the economic theory of the new sectionalism. The pronouncement of this group was published in 1930 in *I'll Take My Stand by Twelve Southerners*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 35, p. 8

<sup>2</sup> 260, pp. 313-314.

<sup>3</sup> 260, p. 321

<sup>4</sup> 260

<sup>5</sup> 261

The theme of this book, as announced in the introduction, may be summarized as follows

The theory of agrarianism is that the culture of the soil is the best and most sensitive of vocations, and that therefore it should have economic preference and enlist the maximum number of workers.<sup>6</sup>

In regard to the amenities of life, the agrarians see in the Old South a glory worthy of revival.<sup>7</sup> And they argue, *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, that the South's ills are due to the new industrialism.<sup>8</sup> In *Harper's Magazine*, June, 1929, John Crowe Ransom, one of the more articulate of the group, wrote

The South is unique on this continent for having founded and defended a culture which was according to the European principles of culture, and the European principles had better look to the South if they are to be perpetuated in this country.<sup>9</sup>

A few months later Hermann Keyserling bolstered the faith of the agrarians by announcing that the South was the cultural hope of America.<sup>10</sup>

Most students felt that Ulrich Bonnell Phillips<sup>11</sup> and Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker<sup>12</sup> had dealt the old tradition a sufficient blow, so that the facts could speak for themselves. It was generally conceded that in debate Stringfellow Barr of the University of Virginia had confronted John Crowe Ransom with irrefutable statistics and documented facts of Southern life.<sup>13</sup>

For some years little was heard of the agrarians. But the great depression has given them another opportunity to present their case. Recently Donald Davidson, professor of English at Vanderbilt University, has published four articles on sectionalism. In *Hound and Horn*, July-September, 1933, he writes:

Sectionalism is no mere vestige from an older time, archaic and negligible. It is a function of the national life. The sections are real entities, not sentimental fictions. . . .

Sectionalism is inherent in the democratic institutions that have been established and developed in the United States. When it is omitted from consideration, the noblest speculations are diluted with ignorance and nonsense.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 261, p. xix. W. T. Couch criticizes this theory as inadequate and impossible in *Culture in the South*, pp. vii-x. 52

<sup>7</sup> 261. <sup>8</sup> 261, pp. ix-xx. <sup>9</sup> 222, p. 109. <sup>10</sup> 136, pp. 605-608. <sup>11</sup> 206; 207. <sup>12</sup> 228, 269. <sup>13</sup> See 14, pp. 481-494. <sup>14</sup> 57, pp. 562, 588.



Professor Davidson discourses at great length on the differences between Cousin Roderick of Georgia and Brother Jonathan of Vermont in the issues of *The American Review* for November and for December, 1933.<sup>15</sup> He claims that we have never had a national literature<sup>16</sup> and that the mind of New England is not the mind of the South. *The American Mercury* for February, 1934, contains the fourth pronouncement of the Vanderbilt professor. In writing of the "Dilemma of the Southern Liberals," he pays further tribute to his conception of a departed South.<sup>17</sup> In these writings some findings of research have apparently been overlooked.

Other Southerners show sectional leanings. Benjamin B. Kendrick, chairman of the Southern Regional Committee of the Social Science Research Council and professor of history at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, says in an article in the *Southwest Review*, January, 1934:

During the past four years a larger and larger number of Southern intellectuals and some few Southern business leaders have begun to wonder if the prophets of the New South were altogether true prophets.<sup>18</sup>

He criticizes the Southern business man, saying that a callous selfishness has replaced *noblesse oblige*. He wants an educational program which will be manned largely by Southerners.<sup>19</sup> In the same issue of the *Southwest Review*,<sup>20</sup> Charles W. Pipkin, a member of the Southern Regional Committee of the Social Science Research Council and professor of government at Louisiana State University, denounces the Northern control of various governmental enterprises in the South.

At Chapel Hill, under the leadership of Howard W. Odum, director of the Institute for Research in Social Science and professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina, we find another group of Southerners, who call themselves "regionalists." While recognizing the features that undoubtedly characterize Southern life, they see the South through statistical charts, graphs, and the like, which set forth data of social and economic research, rather than through the rose-colored glasses of a false romanticism.<sup>21</sup> Regionalism, according to Professor Odum, is interested first in the contribution that the section can make to the nation.

<sup>15</sup> 58, 59    <sup>16</sup> 57, p. 575    For a more detailed discussion of this point, see Rourke, Constance, "The Significance of Sections," pp. 148-151    225

<sup>17</sup> 60.    <sup>18</sup> 134, p. 185    <sup>19</sup> 134, pp. 180-195    <sup>20</sup> 209, pp. 175-182    <sup>21</sup> 194

Any regional concept adequate to contribute to the larger understanding of the society or societies must clearly not be merely a study of local areas in the spirit and method of localism or sectionalism.<sup>22</sup>

He uses an analogy from genetics, characterizing sectionalism as in-breeding and regionalism as line-breeding

Sectionalism would inbreed to stagnation by ignoring time, technology, and collaboration, regionalism would develop new strength from old power through progressive line-breeding of new cultures built upon the old.<sup>23</sup>

William Heard Kilpatrick, speaking in 1930, before the student body of the University of North Carolina, expressed much the same idea when he said "Our whole nation should build itself into one individuality. Within it, the several sections should each have their own distinct individualities . . ." <sup>24</sup> While recognizing that any civilization must be built upon the local traditions and customs, the true regionalist must see beyond sectional loyalties, formal legislative enactments, and political boundaries <sup>25</sup>

The regional point of view characterizes the expressions of judgment used as standards in this chapter.<sup>26</sup> A plan, growing out of the thinking of Southern writers and statesmen with this outlook, will be constructed. On the basis of the larger concepts and more detailed specifics which these persons believe make for a richer and better life, standards will be set for judging the shortages in the lives of Carolina cotton mill workers. Additional criteria will be added from ideals implicit in the criticisms of the various writers. In no sense will the suggested program be a mere copy of a civilization developed elsewhere. That would be a "fool's errand" <sup>27</sup> However, learning based on the present level of a people is the only sound educational procedure

The persons whose ideas will be used are Thomas Jefferson, Woodrow Wilson, Walter Hines Page, Edward Kidder Graham, Frank Porter Graham, Howard W. Odum, William Heard Kilpatrick, William Louis Poteat, Charles B. Aycock, Edgar W. Knight, Broadus Mitchell, Lois Macdonald, Harriet L. Herring, John H. Cook, Mercer G. Evans, Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, Virginius Dabney, and others

<sup>22</sup> 193.    <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>24</sup> 137, p. 15    <sup>25</sup> 193

<sup>26</sup> A group of Georgia writers and statesmen had championed, soon after Reconstruction, this wider view of the South's rôle in the nation. 166, pp. 277, 299.

<sup>27</sup> 200, p. 134, 137, pp. 11-13.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIBERTY

In his first inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson outlined a government based on the principles of the Declaration of Independence. Then he asked what more was needed to make a happy and prosperous people. His reply was that government should restrain men from injuring one another, should not take from labor the bread it has earned, and should leave men free otherwise to regulate their own pursuits.<sup>28</sup> If it is the duty of government to grant its citizens these privileges, it becomes its obligation to see that those who jeopardize the exercise of these rights are restrained. The principle of liberty, which is a fundamental part of the Declaration of Independence, involves freedom of speech and assembly. No matter how obnoxious the idea, everyone should be allowed to present his case decently.<sup>29</sup>

If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.<sup>30</sup>

Only through freedom of expression can the self-realization of the whole man be attained, and only through the open-minded search can we come to a way of life that is ever recreating itself.<sup>31</sup> Freedom of thought must be guarded with all care.<sup>32</sup> The teacher should be free from all sects, classes, and parties.<sup>33</sup> A necessary part of the principle of liberty is the right to study the social and economic order without political interference.<sup>34</sup> Liberty implies that truth-seekers will "never shut the windows to outside light, and . . . never close the book of knowledge."<sup>35</sup> Well might every Southerner take for his own the words of that great Virginian and American, Thomas Jefferson: ". . . I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."<sup>36</sup>

The South must democratize its political institutions without sacrificing its ideals and must industrialize its society without destroying its soul.<sup>37</sup> Thus political democracy will become more than voting and office-holding, important as these are; it will

<sup>28</sup> 56, p. 19    <sup>29</sup> Graham in 36, p. 258    <sup>30</sup> Cited by 137, p. 38    <sup>31</sup> Graham in 88, p. 280, 137, pp. 101-105    <sup>32</sup> 192, p. 114    <sup>33</sup> 200, p. 77    <sup>34</sup> 87, p. 109.    <sup>35</sup> 7, p. 22.    <sup>36</sup> 81, p. 80    <sup>37</sup> Connor in 191, p. 205.

involve service on the part of the government in meeting the needs of the community<sup>38</sup>

Not only must the back of special privilege be broken, but the doctrine of equal opportunity must be rethought<sup>39</sup> This notion does not imply that all will have the same opportunity, but it does signify that every person shall have a chance to develop such capacities and abilities as he has This idea is at the bottom of all social progress.<sup>40</sup> We must think of a civilization where

. . . individualism will not mean the freedom of any individual to impair the lives of other men, but will mean such social control as will guarantee the freedom of every individual to make the most of his personality, where machines shall not through the long watches of a sixty-hour week tyrannize over the bodies and spirit of men, where children in factories shall become children in school, where there shall be no industrial night work for women . . . where human deterioration will be recognized as an impairment of the general productive power and a detraction from the human satisfactions of all in the general life, where industrial production will win the liberation of the mind and the spirit of man for the creation of a more beautiful civilization<sup>41</sup>

The weak should be protected from exploitation by the strong<sup>42</sup> In the building of a great Southern civilization, the full development of the common man, the laboring man, is a necessary cornerstone in a solid structure

When I look back on the processes of history, when I survey the genesis of America, I see this written over every page that the nations are renewed from the bottom, not from the top, that the genius which springs up from the ranks of unknown men is the genius which renews the youth and energy of the people . . . the real wisdom of human life is compounded out of the experiences of ordinary men<sup>43</sup>

No man can be well-developed in a society of undeveloped men.<sup>44</sup>

#### INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

The great task of the South is the recreation and preservation of real personalities A large and growing faith, stimulated by deep and productive interests, is basic to this development. For

<sup>38</sup> 68, pp 315-316    <sup>39</sup> 276, pp 3-78, 80    <sup>40</sup> 81, p 248, 200, pp 4-5; 199, p 109, 46, pp 328-329    <sup>41</sup> Cited by 138, p. 48    <sup>42</sup> 276, p 221, 137, p 97  
<sup>43</sup> 276, p 79

.    <sup>44</sup> 200, pp 3, 73, 46, p 341.

a wholesome and satisfying outlook on life, there must be an "integration of all life's meanings, geographic and economic no less than historical and spiritual, into one characterizing outlook"<sup>45</sup> A civilization must be measured by the men that it produces<sup>46</sup> It must not be forgotten that working people are individuals like anyone else and that business was made for man, not man for business<sup>47</sup>

The liberal tradition of the South has at the heart of its thinking the dignity and worth of the individual<sup>48</sup> Edward Kidder Graham, former president of the University of North Carolina, wrote that the only demand of culture was the achievement of a "fully and harmoniously developed life for the individual and for the State."<sup>49</sup> As the South approaches its modern problems, it has the great opportunity of adjusting its social life "in the light of the worth of the human personality—the basis of all true liberalism"<sup>50</sup>

. . . In the building of a more economically productive and spiritually beautiful civilization, let us place in the center of it all not mechanisms but personality, not products but spirit, and not the dividends of today but the children of tomorrow<sup>51</sup>

#### INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

Walter Hines Page in his *Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths* stated that two forces were making a new South One was education; the other was industry<sup>52</sup>

This industrial development would finally work out the inherent democratic tendency of the people if no other force were brought into play. But no man who knows the gentleness and the dignity and the leisure of the old Southern life would like to see these qualities blunted by too rude a growth of sheer industrialism<sup>53</sup>

There must be an industrial democracy in the South, for this is one of the "fundamental and organic parts of the whole structure of democracy, without which equal opportunity may not be attained. . ."<sup>54</sup> The day of exploitation of Southern labor has passed We cannot have a healthy civilization if it is based on

<sup>45</sup> 137, pp 11-13, 15-16, 91-94, 101-105      <sup>46</sup> 198, p 66      <sup>47</sup> 4, p 11, Callahan in 116, pp 11-13      <sup>48</sup> 55, p 415      <sup>49</sup> 86, p 85      <sup>50</sup> Poteat in 52, p 269  
<sup>51</sup> Graham in 242, p 88      <sup>52</sup> 200, pp 140-142      <sup>53</sup> 200, p 141.      <sup>54</sup> 68, p 316

the exploitation of poor white people. A prosperity founded on slavery is a false prosperity.<sup>55</sup> Capital and labor must join hands in an attempt to build a more adequate civilization.<sup>56</sup> Social betterment and economic well-being are the goals which industry must seek in the building of a community.<sup>57</sup>

Southern industrial statesmanship has no greater responsibility or opportunity than that of working out the basis and the structure of this creative co-operation in industrial production with just recognition of the value and rights of capital, management, and labor.<sup>58</sup>

Ruthless attacks upon capital by labor will serve no good purpose, but industry must realize that its dictatorship has ended.<sup>59</sup> The new path which lies ahead points toward a planning society where production for profit will not be the dominant motive.<sup>60</sup> Implicit in the co-operative idea is the recognition of the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively, just as capital has done in the past.<sup>61</sup>

The principle of collective bargaining, which is at the center of the democratic movement in its latest phase, is resourced in the very springs of American democracy and will test the sincerity of our faith in the American idea.<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore, the general problems of labor, such as hiring, firing, and the labor turnover, should be considered co-operatively.<sup>63</sup> Also, the principle that every man has a right to work for a living is a responsibility upon capital.<sup>64</sup>

The Southern white people have been largely of one mind since Reconstruction. A lack of violence has generally characterized the relations between employer and employee.<sup>65</sup> Small mills and a common background have made for close personal relations between owner and worker. Moreover, there is a feeling of fair play in the Southern people.<sup>66</sup> The specific applications of the concept of social justice in individual relations must be developed in the South. This demands that broad generalities like the "golden rule" be broken into more definite human relations.

<sup>55</sup> 54, pp 325-335. <sup>56</sup> 103, pp 11-21, 94, p 109, Edmonds in 116, pp 80-85

<sup>57</sup> Lamson in 228, p 243 <sup>58</sup> Graham in 36, p 258. <sup>59</sup> 12, p. 308

<sup>60</sup> Mitchell in 52, pp 91-92 <sup>61</sup> Graham in 36, pp 258-259, 259, pp. 286-288, 177, 116, pp 32-36 <sup>62</sup> Graham in 36, p 259 <sup>63</sup> 105, pp 269-271. <sup>64</sup> Ed-

monds in 116, pp 50-53, 56, p 422, 212, pp 61-62 <sup>65</sup> 103, pp. 11-13, Mitchell in 36, pp 24-26, 176, pp 499-503, Potwin in 116, pp 56-61. <sup>66</sup> 103, p 11

With a change in the policies of capital, there must come an education of the whole community to a social-mindedness and the education of labor to an industrial-mindedness. Critical thinking about capital and labor must displace the notion that any industry is good which gives people an opportunity to work.<sup>67</sup> Governor O. Max Gardner defined the educative process very aptly when he said

We do not want general content . . . with our industrial or economic arrangements. We do not want complacency or smug satisfaction. We do not want docile citizens or docile employees. What we want is orderly, restrained struggle for change . . . freedom in which ideas and opinions may be advanced.<sup>68</sup>

#### SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

The village system in Southern industry is incompatible with the fundamental concepts of democracy. It limits the worker in the exercise of his constitutional rights.<sup>69</sup> Woodrow Wilson said "benevolence never developed a man or a nation."<sup>70</sup> The common idea that certain favored ones have a right and a duty to protect the interests and guard the welfare of others is abhorrent to liberal thinking.<sup>71</sup>

Justice is what we want, not patronage and condescension, and pitiful helpfulness . . . I do not want to live under a philanthropy. I want only to have right and justice prevail, so far as I am concerned . . . There is no salvation for men in the pitiful condescensions of industrial masters.<sup>72</sup>

As soon as some feasible plan can be devised, the mill houses should be sold to the people, the school buildings should be deeded to the county or district, and all industry within the city limits should be placed in common tax areas.<sup>73</sup> Villages of over a thousand inhabitants should be incorporated. Welfare work, under its present paternalistic management, should give place to community enterprises.<sup>74</sup> The operatives should be merged into a wider life, where they can mingle freely with their fellows.<sup>75</sup> Mill children and adults should be able to go into other occupations. A wider

<sup>67</sup> 178, pp. 112-113    <sup>68</sup> 70    <sup>69</sup> 177    <sup>70</sup> 276, p. 218    <sup>71</sup> 63, p. 23.  
<sup>72</sup> 276, pp. 198, 216, 286    <sup>73</sup> 50, pp. 48-49    <sup>74</sup> 50, p. 50, 192, p. 257    <sup>75</sup> 137,  
pp. 39-42; 50, p. 50, 168, p. 66, 155, pp. 146-151, 77, pp. 1358-1359.

industrialization, with more alternative employment, should be the goal of Southern leaders <sup>76</sup>

#### BETTER HOMES

A less nomadic population should supplant the restless folks now living on "mill hill." People become more interested in their community activities when these activities are managed and controlled by themselves. Listlessness and indifference should be replaced by a desire to do something with one's personal belongings <sup>77</sup> The attitude which results in untidiness in yards and homes can be changed to a wish to make property attractive <sup>78</sup> Dreary homes, needless sickness, inefficient housekeeping, and ill-balanced diets will disappear with wider education <sup>79</sup>

#### ADEQUATE INCOME

Higher wages, which will mean the disappearance of low compensation for personal service and a wider consumption of needed goods, should be paid to Southern workers <sup>80</sup> The hope of the South comes from raising the income of its poorly paid workers <sup>81</sup> Patrick Callahan, a Southern industrialist, writes

To pay dividends on capital and salaries to executives and fees to promoters, and not pay a living wage to the normal workers in any business, is a perversion of the fundamental ethics of business enterprise as it ignores the necessity of maintaining decent human relations, which is the first reason for business. <sup>82</sup>

Every man, woman and child must be assured of the minimum essentials of life. <sup>83</sup> For this, the weekly wage set by the Department of Agriculture for a family of five is \$17.16, according to a 1931 estimate <sup>84</sup>

#### RELIGION AND CREATIVE RECREATION

Christians should realize that they ought to live a full and rich life in this world as well as prepare for the world that is to come. <sup>85</sup> Rightly did Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, himself a clergyman, denounce a narrow view of life when he remarked that no interest of religion was served by cutting off any inno-

<sup>76</sup> 177, Mitchell in 56, p. 25, Murchison in 52, p. 103, 157 <sup>77</sup> 157, pp. 39-42  
<sup>78</sup> 10, pp. 10-11 <sup>79</sup> 189, p. 356, 194 <sup>80</sup> Murchison in 52, p. 103 <sup>81</sup> 167,  
 pp. 78-79 <sup>82</sup> Callahan in 116, p. 10 <sup>83</sup> 134, p. 186 <sup>84</sup> 245, p. 1091  
<sup>85</sup> 137, p. 22, 212, p. 45



cent enjoyment.<sup>86</sup> An interest in play for its own sake and the urge to create for the joy of achievement should displace the idea that every act must have some specific utility as measured by puritanical standards.<sup>87</sup>

The defeatist philosophy, which often encourages contentment with slovenliness and poverty, should give place to a rich and full living of the program of Jesus.<sup>88</sup> What Jesus did is as important as what he said. His way of life, his beneficent social plan, must become a part of Southern character. No longer should the church be concerned exclusively with the preaching of an emotional theology, rather it should teach people to live as Jesus lived.<sup>89</sup> The truth should make for freedom rather than bondage. Man should be taught not to think only of himself and his personal salvation.<sup>90</sup> The Sermon on the Mount and the Great Commandment should be broken into specific ideals that can be applied to situations which arise in human life.

The program of Jesus emphasizes co-operation rather than competition, persons rather than things, and social unity rather than class antagonisms. The Christian spirit restrains private greed and suggests a new heart rather than a minute regulation of personal conduct.<sup>91</sup>

The only hope of peace between capital and labor lies not in arbitration or conferences of the organized groups, but in the employer and the employee—these two men with different kinds of wealth—recognizing themselves for what they are, brothers in Christ.<sup>92</sup>

#### BETTER RACE RELATIONS

That great Southern problem, the Negro, can be considered only in the light of his own best interests as well as those of the white man.<sup>93</sup> Although racial separation is necessary, racial intolerance, bigotry, and crime must be forgotten. The training of the Negro to economic independence is the only means of emancipating both races.<sup>94</sup> The growth of a wider tolerance and a more acute critical-mindedness should cause the passing of "Klans," super-patriotism, sectional animosities, and religious intolerance.<sup>95</sup> Mutual co-operation and respect will bring a better understanding.

<sup>86</sup> Wade in 191, p. 127. <sup>87</sup> 223, p. 176. <sup>88</sup> 200, pp. 24-25. <sup>89</sup> 212, pp. 51, 58. <sup>90</sup> 212, p. 54. <sup>91</sup> 212, pp. 61-62, 67-78. <sup>92</sup> 212, p. 63. <sup>93</sup> 194, 185, p. 277. <sup>94</sup> 200, p. 126, 263, pp. 295-296. <sup>95</sup> 137, pp. 38-39; 192, p. 299; 178, pp. 112-113, 173, pp. 20-22, 87, p. 109.

The new South, where social and economic problems take the place of narrow political issues, will replace the old solid South <sup>96</sup>

#### SOCIAL LEGISLATION

English history shows that social laws, as well as labor organizations, are necessary checks on unscrupulous corporations <sup>97</sup> Social legislation guarantees the freedom and initiative of a large number of people and guards the sanctity of the home by eliminating child labor and night work for women. Long hours do not necessarily mean profits, and reduced hours do not always promote idleness and inactivity. Industrial history shows that the most highly regulated industries have become the most economically and socially profitable. <sup>98</sup>

Industry we have got to humanize—through the direct action of law guaranteeing protection against dangers and compensation for injuries, guaranteeing sanitary conditions, proper hours, the right to organize, and all the other things which the conscience of the country demands as the workingman's right <sup>99</sup>

Child labor is anathema to any civilized people. It must be outlawed in the South <sup>100</sup> In the interest of the health of the woman worker and the well-being of the community, women should not be allowed to work at night. These two forward moves—outlawing of child labor and of night work for women—would eliminate the practice, so common in Southern mills, of employing whole families <sup>101</sup> A workingmen's compensation law is necessary for industrial democracy <sup>102</sup> Also, old age pension systems, which properly care for those that industry has dismissed, must be established. "Only by collective action can the emergencies which have arisen in our social and economic life—sickness, invalidity, unemployment, and old age—be met." <sup>103</sup> The temperature and humidity of cotton mills should be checked frequently, and artificial devices for the proper regulation of the atmosphere should be required. <sup>104</sup> Since windows in most textiles plants cannot be opened, careful consideration ought to be given to methods of ventilation <sup>105</sup> Glaring lights, which are often found in Southern

<sup>96</sup> 137, pp 38-42, 178, pp 112-113      <sup>97</sup> Graham in 36, pp 261-262      <sup>98</sup> Graham in 36, p 263.      <sup>99</sup> 276, p 292      <sup>100</sup> 189, p 356, 263, p 304      <sup>101</sup> 189, p 356, Graham in 36, p 259, 161, p 26, 162, p 100, 42, 91      <sup>102</sup> 69, p 476  
<sup>103</sup> 76, p 31      <sup>104</sup> 18, pp 25, 39      <sup>105</sup> 8, 278, pp 55-56

mills, should be replaced by more properly adjusted fixtures.<sup>106</sup> Sanitary drinking fountains and improved toilet fixtures ought to be installed in all plants.<sup>107</sup> The standards set by the United States government as to number and kind should be followed.<sup>108</sup> Every section in the mill ought to have a cloak room.<sup>109</sup> Washing facilities—soap, towels, and hot water—should be provided by every plant. All mill doors ought to open outward. Every precaution against accidents should be taken. Belting and dangerous machinery ought to be guarded.<sup>110</sup>

The whole question of exhaustion due to the "speeding-up process," usually called "the stretch-out," has not been settled. The "Code of Fair Competition for the Textile Industry" made provision for grievance committees in every plant and state. Any industrial dispute was to be heard before these bodies.<sup>111</sup> It is certain, however, that fatigue lowers the ability of a person to resist anti-social activities.<sup>112</sup> Moreover, it is possible to eliminate many of the uncomfortable postures and excessive strains and much of the continuous reaching in manufacturing. Seating facilities should be provided in order that workers may rest during their spare time.<sup>113</sup> A recent report of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor sets twelve rest minutes an hour as a reasonable amount.<sup>114</sup> In view of the "speed-up" in industry, this ought to be a minimum.

#### REALISTIC EDUCATION

Soon after the Civil War, J. L. M. Curry, a leader of post-bellum education in the South, said that he was not afraid of the educated masses,<sup>115</sup> and about the same time Ben H. Hill made a speech at the University of Georgia in which he said.

. . . No new civilization can be equal to the demands of the age which does not lay its foundations in the intelligence of the people and in the multiplication and social elevation of educated industries . . .<sup>116</sup>

Thomas Jefferson wanted a crusade preached against ignorance. He saw education as the means by which man was to develop into a finer personality, and he believed it was the only way of protecting political rights and institutions against unjust encroach-

<sup>106</sup> *§78*, p. 54      <sup>107</sup> *§78*, p. 67      <sup>108</sup> *Ibid*      <sup>109</sup> *§78*, p. 69      <sup>110</sup> *§78*, pp. 60-61      <sup>111</sup> *45*, pp. 13-14      <sup>112</sup> *161*, p. 24      <sup>113</sup> *§78*, pp. 58-60      <sup>114</sup> *217*  
<sup>115</sup> *166*, p. 278      <sup>116</sup> Mims in *243*, p. 142.

ments <sup>117</sup> "Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppression of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day" <sup>118</sup>

Walter Hines Page believed that the state should train every child to usefulness. He said the education of the people was responsible for the progress of the United States <sup>119</sup> Howard W. Odum wants a civilization where

. . . each individual, coming to the community with certain full fledged abilities and qualities, may then have an opportunity to grow to the fullest normal development . <sup>120</sup>

Charles B. Aycock, a former governor of North Carolina, put it most dramatically when he closed his last written address with these words

Equal! That is the word. On that word I plant myself and my party—the equal right of every child born on earth to have the opportunity "to burgeon out all that there is within him" <sup>121</sup>

Edward Kidder Graham said "the fundamentals of democracy have all of their vital roots in education. Equality of opportunity is there, and there alone." <sup>122</sup> President Graham wanted a vital culture in the South. Every man is capable of pursuing some phase of culture, he said. Only in this fashion can a nation attain greatness <sup>123</sup> If the South is to regain its lost place in the nation, it must do so through a program of universal education <sup>124</sup>

The tendency of mill children to leave school at the fourteenth birthday ought to be checked. High school graduation should be the standard requirement, unless the person is intellectually incapable or socially unstable <sup>125</sup> Community libraries, where the people may come to read, must be established if ignorance is to be dispelled from the Southland <sup>126</sup> The schoolhouse should become the neighborhood center where men and women meet to discuss the affairs that touch their everyday life. <sup>127</sup>

<sup>117</sup> 81, p. 485; 110, pp. 148-149      <sup>118</sup> 81, p. 155      <sup>119</sup> 199, pp. 100, 105  
<sup>120</sup> 68, p. 317      <sup>121</sup> 263, p. 306      <sup>122</sup> 86, p. 180      <sup>123</sup> 86, p. 66      <sup>124</sup> 46,  
p. 281.      <sup>125</sup> 155, p. 147, 50, pp. 48-49, 157      <sup>126</sup> 50, p. 44, 139, p. 240, 140,  
pp. 234-236.      <sup>127</sup> 276, pp. 95-99

## Chapter Six

### THE BASES FOR CONSTRUCTING A CURRICULUM FOR ADULT GROUPS IN A CAROLINA COTTON MILL VILLAGE

BY APPLYING the specific concepts developed from the writings of outstanding Southerners, which comprise Chapter V of this study, to the described conditions in Carolina cotton mill villages, the shortages in the lives of the operatives have been found. An example of the method by which the shortages have been obtained is presented below. The six weaknesses listed under "Paternalism of the village system," (see shortage A, p. 100) are got by placing certain concepts drawn from "A Regional Plan" (the column to the right below), constructed from Chapter V, against the specific characteristics of "The Village System" which has been constructed by gathering data from Chapters II, III, and IV of the study. These data are given in the column to the left below. The notations within the parentheses of these outlines give the chapter and paragraph in the body of the dissertation which discuss the point.

#### THE VILLAGE SYSTEM

- A. Ownership by the management of the houses and the property surrounding the mill building.

*Evidence* It is general, though not universal, for the mills to own villages surrounding their mill property. (Chapter III, entire, especially Types of Villages, The Old Village, The Model Community, and Housing in the Village.) About 70

#### SPECIFIC CONCEPTS DRAWN FROM "A REGIONAL PLAN"

- A. The village system is incompatible with the fundamental concepts of democracy. (Social Democracy, paragraph 1.)
1. The paternalistic care for the rights and interests of others is undemocratic. (Social Democracy, paragraph 1.)
  2. A prosperity founded on a

per cent of the operatives live in houses owned by the management. (Chapter III, footnote 175 )

type of slavery is a false prosperity.

(Industrial Democracy, paragraph 1 )

3 Man cannot develop under a paternalism.

(Social Democracy, paragraph 1.)

4 People should own their homes.

(Social Democracy, paragraph 1, Better Homes, entire )

B Supervision by the owners of recreation buildings, athletic fields, swimming pools, etc

*Evidence* The mills own and supervise the welfare buildings. (Chapter III, General Welfare Work, paragraphs 1 and 2 )

Athletic fields, parks, and swimming pools used by the operatives are, also, owned by the management (Chapter III, General Welfare Work, paragraph 2.)

Some stores which supply mill communities are owned and controlled by the management (Chapter III, Paternalism of the Village System, paragraphs 1 and 2.)

B All characteristics of philanthropy should be abolished in mill villages

(Social Democracy, entire )

1 Welfare activities ought to be replaced by normal social life

(Social Democracy, paragraph 1 )

2. Adequate money wages should be paid to the operatives.

(Adequate Wages, paragraph 1 )

3 Pride of ownership is a vital stimulus to effective community life

(Better Homes, entire )

C. Control by the management of various extra-mill activities of the workers

*Evidence* The mill has some supervision over most of the social life of the operatives club programs, athletics, parties, religious and health programs, educational activities, etc (Chapter III, Paternalism of

C. See B above.

the Village System, entire; General Welfare Work, paragraphs 1 and 3, The Health Program, paragraph 1, Religion on the Hill, paragraphs 1 and 5, Education in the Village, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, Adult Education in the Village, entire.)

Where industrial democracy is practiced, the operatives have more voice in the management of the extra-mill activities than elsewhere. But final control usually rests with the management. (Chapter III, Industrial Democracy in the Village, entire; Chapter II, Leadership in the Village, entire.)

- D. Supervision by the mill of gardens, lawns, etc

D. See B above.

*Evidence:* The mill owners often donate seed and plant flower and vegetable gardens for the workers. (Chapter III, The Model Community, paragraph 1; General Welfare Work, paragraph 3, Chapter II, Leadership in the Village, paragraph 1.)

Hedges, lawns, and trees are planted and tended by the management. (Chapter III, The Model Community, paragraph 1; Chapter III, footnote 19 )

- E. Payment of wages in kind

E. See B above.

*Evidence:* Instead of giving the operatives a money payment equaling their entire income, the management rents its houses for low rates and sells the workers coal and wood at a lower figure than that charged by

commercial dealers. (Chapter II, Wages of the Operatives, paragraph 5; Chapter III, Paternalism of the Village System, paragraph 1)

**F Control by the management of the political life of the workers**

*Evidence* The four types of villages discussed at the beginning of Chapter III are all supervised by the owners in varying degrees (Chapter III, Types of Villages, entire, Paternalism of the Village System, paragraph 4)

While the operatives vote in county and state elections, they have little or no voice in the community and city governments. (Chapter II, Social Life of the Mill Worker, paragraph 3)

Deputy sheriffs or special policemen, who are frequently paid by the management, see that order prevails in mill villages. (Chapter III, footnotes 3 and 5.)

**G. Dependent character of the mill people.**

*Evidence* There is general agreement that the operatives depend upon the management for the direction of their social life (See A, B, C, and D above)

The workers appear to be unable to manage affairs for themselves. (Chapter II, Leadership in the Village, entire)

The inferiority complex of the mill worker is evidence of the feeling of deficiency (Chapter II, Inferiority Complex of the Operatives, entire.)

**F Political freedom is a fundamental prerequisite for the development of man.**

(Political and Economic Liberty, entire)

1 Man develops through freedom of expression  
(Political and Economic Liberty, paragraph 1.)

2. Political and social controls are necessary for freedom  
(Political and Economic Liberty, paragraph 3, Industrial Democracy, paragraph 1, Social Legislation, paragraph 1)

3 The development of the common man is most important in a democracy.  
(Political and Economic Liberty, paragraph 4)

**G Every individual should have an equal opportunity to develop the abilities that he possesses.**

(Political and Economic Liberty, paragraph 3)

1 The dignity of the individual is traditional in the liberal thinking of the South.  
(Individual Freedom, paragraph 2)

2 The development of integrated personalities is necessary for a satisfactory civilization.  
(Individual Freedom, paragraph 1.)



While the activities of industrial democracy and the management of church socials and community suppers may give the workers some opportunity to show their initiative, these cases are the exception. (Chapter III, Industrial Democracy in the Village, entire; Chapter II, Leadership in the Village, entire.)

3 The operatives should be merged into the community life and be encouraged to enter other occupations. (Social Democracy, paragraph 1.)

H Tendency of the operatives and their children to remain cotton mill workers.

H. See G above.

*Evidence:* Critics have claimed that workers and their children remain in mill villages. This is not entirely true. But there is evidence in support of the belief, "once a mill worker always a mill worker" (Chapter II, Moving from the Hill, entire, Group Consciousness and Individualism of the Workers, paragraph 2.)

If the specific points in the ideal program (column to the right above) are placed against "The village system" (outlined to the left above), the shortages listed under the "Paternalism of the village system" will become apparent. Each of the seventeen general shortages, which are summarized on pp 100 to 107, with the specific items under each head, has been obtained by following a similar procedure.

The fundamental contribution of this study is the list of shortages which is given at the end of this chapter. The adult education program, which is suggested in the parallel column to the right of the shortages, has not been obtained by any exhaustive research. The activities are presented because they have been found to be valuable in similar situations. They must be tested and modified in the light of experience in the different cotton mill communities.

The program does not claim to ameliorate all the weaknesses, nor is it a complete list of activities. Certain types of education, such as teaching illiterates and training for specific vocations, are being given by institutions already in operation. This program, based as it is on the shortages technique, purports to supplement the work of these and other agencies. Furthermore, no one educative program can do much in resolving fundamental cleavages. The root causes of many of the problems lie deep in the national and regional life, and it will require the co-operative work of many agencies to bring their removal. Not all the projects which are suggested in this outline can be used in every Carolina mill community. The leaders in such a program can go only as far from the accepted pattern as the dominant forces in the community will permit. It would probably be wisest to begin with the projects indicated under Sections E and G below.

The various organizations in the community should be utilized, modified, and supplemented in carrying out the program. In the average cotton mill village of the South, the following will be the co-operating agencies: the church, the Young Men's Christian Association, the lodge, the community program, the school, the civic and luncheon clubs, and the parent-teacher association. In addition to these, discussion groups, forums, committees, and clubs for specific projects, and various play and recreational organizations should be provided.

Socially minded individuals and talented persons in the town or city ought to be used in directing various types of projects. In all phases of the program, an attempt should be made to develop local leaders who will ultimately carry on the program without the guidance of trained directors.

#### SHORTAGES IN THE LIVES OF CAROLINA COTTON MILL OPERATIVES

##### A. Paternalism of the village system.

1. Mill ownership of houses, recreation buildings, garages, etc., and the land on which the buildings are located.
2. Mill control and financing of recreation.

#### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE SHORTAGES

- A. Lead the operatives to organize forum discussions which will consider eventual employee ownership of homes. Educate the people by means of discussion groups to see the value of home ownership.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, p. 1.

3. Payment in kind—low rentals and rebates on certain commodities
  4. No political democracy in the community
  5. Lack of leadership in the village
  6. Tendency to stay in the village.
- 4 and 5. Urge upon managers that they establish various types of industrial democracy which will give the people training in the management of their own affairs. Direct the establishment of these programs in the village.
5. Make all projects people-led. Develop leaders by permitting the people to lead
  6. Discover unadjusted persons who should be in other occupations. Set up an agency for helping them to go into other work.
- B. Benevolent despotism of the mill owner.
1. Complete control of a little world—the mill and its village
  2. No understanding of the realistic workings of industrial society
  3. Lack of willingness to share profits with labor
  4. Unenlightened concept of social justice under an industrial society
  5. Friendly yet condescending attitude toward operative.
  6. Desire to manage the personal affairs of the workers.
  7. Unwillingness to have disinterested parties survey the industry
- B See all of A above.
- 1 through 7. Establish personal contacts with mill managers and owners and plan a program of education in fundamental economics and sociology. Put dynamic books in the hands of owners. Talk with them in social gatherings. Talk before luncheon clubs and cotton textile conventions. Attempt to inaugurate the American Federation of Labor's Plan for the co-operative study of the cotton textile industry.<sup>2</sup>
- C An ignorant and defeated people.
1. Little production of leaders within groups which formerly produced them.
- C. Carry on all the educative activity in the various programs in such a way that these major ills will be remedied.
1. Show in talks before civic

<sup>2</sup> 190, pp. 287-291.

2. Apathetic attitude toward life.
  3. Clannish and individualistic people with a strong inferiority complex
  4. Non-critical, credulous, and prejudiced folk.
- D. Worker's ignorance of his place in the economic order.
1. No knowledge or understanding of industrial history
  2. Acceptance of the traditional concepts in economics.
  3. No idea of the meaning of social justice in an industrial society
  4. No understanding of how cotton manufacturing fits into the national economy
  5. Little realization of the value of co-operation toward shared goals
  6. Ignorance of the worker's rights, privileges, and obligations as they were formulated in the textile code.
- E. Puritanical attitude toward play and creative recreation
1. Opposition to play, games, and frolicking.
  2. No knowledge of play or desire to play.
  3. No urge to create something for the joy of creating
  4. Social life dominated by a narrow religion
  5. Mill control and financing of recreation.
- groups how the fine ability now wasted in menial tasks could be utilized for the good of all
- D. Utilize forum discussions, drama, debate, oratory, etc., to educate the people to a wider understanding of the existing order and to more scientific ways of thinking.
1. Inaugurate projects in industrial history which begin with the local scene and develop into wider and more far-reaching implications.
  - 1, 2, and 4. Rewrite for working class levels various pertinent materials appearing at the present time
  - 3, 5, and 6. Discuss the philosophy of co-operation as opposed to "the class struggle" in the forums
- E. Use lodge halls, community buildings, playgrounds, school buildings, and churches for play activities and creative recreation
- 1 and 2. Some play projects.
    - a. Community singing.
    - b. Square dancing clubs
    - c. Groups to perpetuate mountain ballads
    - d. Banjo clubs.
    - e. Hunting and fishing clubs
    - f. Movie clubs
    - g. Mother and father groups playing games.
    - h. Yearly community picnic.

3. Some creative projects:
    - a.* Basket making clubs
    - b.* Quilting bees.
    - c.* Crocheting projects.
    - d.* Manual arts groups.
    - e.* Household furnishing clubs
    - f.* Sewing circles.
    - g.* Dramatic clubs that write and produce plays about mill life
    - h.* Painting and sculpturing groups.
- F. The religious narrowness of the worker.
- 1 Domination of theology in all religious thinking
  2. Attitudes of contentment and despair
  - 3 Fatalistic attitude toward life
  - 4 Emotional emphasis in religion.
  5. Paucity of vital spiritual forces in the life of the community
  6. Lack of worker leadership in the mill churches.
  - 7 Mill financing of the religious program.
- F Co-operate with churches, Sunday Schools, and Y. M. C. A. classes in:
- a.* Rewriting adult Sunday School lessons with emphasis on social problems.
  - b.* Utilizing the co-operative philosophy of the textile code
  - c.* Stressing the active and dynamic aspects of the Christian ethics
  - d.* Showing the relation between the teachings of Jesus and life
- 1, 4 and 5 Lead ministers to see the social implications of Christianity by giving them the literature of some of the more liberal ministers of their denomination and by discussing problems of the community around the fireside
  5. Educate the people to a true spirituality by sponsoring music groups, reading clubs, and sculpturing and painting classes
  - 6 and 7. Insist on activities led, controlled, and financed by workers.

G. An ugly community and an unsatisfactory home

1. Few trees, shrubs, and flowers
2. Inadequate sanitary facilities in many villages.
3. Working mothers — delinquent children.
4. Unattractive and crowded homes.
5. Bare rooms with ugly furnishings
6. Poor cooking and unbalanced diet.
7. Considerable mobility.

G. Promote better living conditions

1. Organize groups whose objective will be the growing of grass, the planting of hedges, and the general beautifying of the community. Encourage the organization of flower and garden clubs
- 2, 4, 5, and 7 Plan home improvement clubs that will
  - a. Construct stands, closets, curtains, rugs, etc
  - b. Discuss informally the disadvantages of overcrowding and the values of home ownership
  - c. Have committees report on the possibilities of improving the sanitary conditions of the village
  - d. Inaugurate a yearly clean-up week.
  - e. Have reports on the sanitary conditions in stores and markets
3. Form groups in the home improvement clubs that will study the causes of delinquency. Direct the setting up of an after-school recreation center
- 4 and 5. Get girls to band together in groups to discuss
  - a. The fundamentals of feminine hygiene.
  - b. Attractive and inexpensive clothing.
  - c. The care and construction of clothes.
  - d. Proper manners
6. See I.
7. Mobility will fall when the causes are removed.

- H. The Southerner's approval of the existing system with its attendant evils.
- 1 Belief that any curbing of the program of the industrial magnates spells economic ruin to the town or city.
  - 2 Lack of critical-mindedness in the consideration of mill problems
  3. General opposition to any worker movements
  - 4 Aloofness of the town people from the mill worker
- I. Inadequate health program
- 1 Voluntary health work of the mill.
  - 2 Inadequate work of the county health department
  - 3 Lack of knowledge of the fundamental health facts
- J Little social legislation on the statute books
1. Inadequate county welfare work
  2. No old age pensions
  3. No seating laws
  4. Laxity in enforcing the laws on the statute books.
- H. Bring about an understanding of the worker and his place in society through
- a. Talks before civic groups.
  - b Newspaper articles on various phases of the program
  - c Visits by prominent community leaders
- I. Promote better health program.
- 1 Present health program inevitable and wisest until the counties have enough money to take over such functions.
  - 2 Utilize all the available agencies for establishing the following
    - a Campaigns for typhoid and smallpox inoculation.
    - b Crusades for the eradication of pellagra
    - c Vegetable garden clubs.
    - d. Demonstrations of proper diets and simple budgets. (This last also applies to G above )
- J Discuss the right and value of social legislation in forum groups
- a. Show how labor-saving and sanitary devices make work less laborious
  - b Organize projects in which groups attempt to set up laws as an educative device for seeing various sides of legislation

- c.* Collect and study social legislation of other states.
  - d* Build the concept of social-mindedness
  - e* Organize political clubs to bring needed legislation to the attention of the lawmakers in the state senate and the house of representatives
  
- K Undesirable working conditions
  - 1. Hard, monotonous work
  - 2. The "stretch-out "
  - 3. Night work for women
  
- L. Unsatisfactory conditions in the mill building.
  - 1 Inadequate bathing facilities
  - 2 No cloak rooms
  - 3. Glaring lights
  - 4 Poor ventilation
  - 5 Lack of other sanitary and protective facilities
  - 6. Violations of existing laws
  
- M Limitations on collective bargaining
  - 1. Opposition among the workers, the community, and the managers.
  - 2 Intolerance toward strikes.
  - 3. Low regard for labor leaders and strikers
  
- K. Bring information relative to better working conditions to the attention of workers and mill owners
  - 1 and 2 Lead the workers to organize committees which will sponsor legislation demanding improved working conditions
  - 3. Lead mill owners to see the need for eliminating night work for women.
  
- L Encourage the workers to
  - a* Discuss in forums for operatives the proper working conditions in the cotton textile industry
  - b* Organize projects in the study of working conditions in model mills
  - c* Bring unsatisfactory conditions to the attention of plant committees on mill conditions
  
- M Consider the right of collective bargaining in a democracy.
  - a* Ask intelligent and cooperative labor leaders to speak before civic organizations
  - b* Give labor plays before civic groups and the workers.



- N. Little industrial diversification.
- 1 No alternative employment —one-industry towns.
  2. No adequate industrial challenge for good, reliable labor.
  3. Unprogressive industry.
- O Lack of co-operation between labor and capital
- 1 No co-operative efforts in the solution of the industry's problems
  - 2 Low wages for labor.
- P. Unsatisfactory attitude toward the Negro.
- 1 Personal intolerance toward the Negro.
  2. Unwillingness to grant him economic justice
- Q. An inadequate education.
- 1 Insufficient financial support
  2. Unprogressive methods
  3. Narrow curriculum.
  4. Inadequate equipment
  5. Brief school life of the child.
  6. Laxity in the enforcement of the compulsory laws
- N. Bring to the attention of the industrial leaders through any available channels
- a The waste of high ability among laborers who are offered such scant vocational opportunities
  - b. Possibilities of other industries for the town
- O Utilize the facilities for co-operative action under the American Federation of Labor's Plan for joint cost accounting.<sup>3</sup>
- P. Discuss as completely as possible the race question and its implications in the forum groups
- Q. Have the parent-teacher association become a forum for the discussion of more adequate educational support, progressive methods, and a more vitalized curriculum.
5. Have the political committee of the village consider the raising of the compulsory school attendance limit from 14 to 16 years
  6. Point out in forum discussions the necessity of having school laws enforced.

<sup>3</sup> 190, pp 287-291

## Chapter Seven

### A TECHNIQUE FOR INTRODUCING A PROGRAM OF ADULT EDUCATION IN A CAROLINA COTTON MILL VILLAGE

THE GENERAL unrest of the depression and post-depression periods has undoubtedly affected the Carolina cotton mill worker profoundly. The breach between the operative and employer has been widened in places by the policies of the trade unions and by the education of the working people in realistic economics. But there is no fundamental cleavage between the worker and owner as the Marxian economist conceives it. Rather it might be termed a disagreement between friends. The operative feels that the owner is his friend and is willing to co-operate with the management in any program of mutual betterment.

However, the technique of approach in a meaningful adult education program must be different from that employed by the mill welfare agencies. In the opinion of the writer, the greatest single deterrent to the education of the mill worker is his inferiority complex. The feeling that something is being done for him as a peculiar person accentuates this social deficiency and causes further resentment. If the operative could be brought to feel that his project is a part of the farmer's and city worker's program, he would be more likely to co-operate. It thus appears that an adult education program should become a county-wide program. The rural and town people should be enlisted in adult activities probably before the mill worker's project begins. The operative will be likely to take part in a program which he feels is a county movement.

While the shortages listed in this study apply specifically to Carolina cotton mill people, many characterize Southerners in general. The summary list may be used as a partial basis for organizing the county program and should be set as a check for the mill projects.

It is necessary that an adult education program of the kind

contemplated be instituted and carried on by Southerners. The discussion of controversial issues will be difficult enough when directed by native leaders; outsiders will find the hindrances almost insuperable. It is unfortunate that an uncritical South still nurses issues of a past age, but it is true. Realities must be faced by those who are planning vital education.

A program based on the above technique and co-ordinated with an adult leadership project at Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina, has been proposed by the writer. The outline presented below indicates the salient features of this plan.

A PROPOSED PLAN FOR A COUNTY ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM  
AND AN ADULT COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROJECT AT FURMAN  
UNIVERSITY, GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

*Prefatory Remarks*

The program outlined in the following pages proposes to.

- A. Inaugurate an adult education project for the city and county of Greenville, South Carolina.
- B. Assist in the training of students in Furman University who are prospective leaders of adult programs.

The adult education project will be governed by two ideas, namely:

1. That the building of an intelligent and active public mind in a democracy rests upon an understanding of the fundamental facts and problems of modern life.
2. That the development of the creative impulses found among people in all walks of life will release a number of valuable ideas and bring satisfaction to many now floundering in the new leisure.

The teacher-training phase of the program will be based on the belief

1. That a study of the history and philosophy of adult education, with an examination of the successes and failures of various kinds of programs tried elsewhere, is a necessary foundation for the training of community leaders.
2. That the participation of college students, who will become social workers, teachers, business men, lawyers, doctors, and others, in adult projects in a typical Southern Piedmont county is the most effective preparation for community leadership.

*Specific Objectives of the Program*

To set up and carry on for a period of five years an adult education program and a teacher-training project in Greenville, South Carolina, which will demonstrate the possibilities of utilizing (a) a typical industrial and agricultural county in the Piedmont South (b) for the development of local community leaders (c) through the participation of socially minded citizens and college students in the various aspects of the program.

*Philosophy of the Program*

The project is based squarely upon the principle that a community should educate itself. The utilization of the latent possibilities of the individuals of the community—teachers, social workers, business men, housewives, socially minded citizens, doctors, and others—will be fundamental to the proposed scheme. This involves the training of competent leaders who will be stimulated and taught by the directors. The building of appropriate study material will be one of the chief tasks of the associate director and assistants.

*Basis of the Program*

The needs and interests of the people of Greenville County will be discovered by a survey. Already much material on the Southern Piedmont people is at hand in government publications, university studies, and individual researches. All available material will be used in an attempt to discover sound bases for the program. The findings and the experience of leaders in the communities will be an important source. Needed modifications will be made as the program develops.

*Emphasis in the Program*

It is believed that among Southern people there are great lacks in socio-economic understandings and in the satisfactory use of native capacities and abilities in leisure-time activities. It is probable that the largest returns from adult programs will come from a study of social and economic problems and a utilization of leisure time for creativeness. Various types of projects will be developed to meet these needs. For example, forum discussions in economic and social problems will be planned. Folk culture will be used as

a means of stimulating different types of activities. An attempt will be made to integrate the projects into a program that will eventuate in more complete living for the people of Greenville County.

*Relation of the Program to the County*

The schools, colleges, churches, community centers, granges, school improvement associations, Y M C A 's, newspapers, garden clubs, reading circles, libraries, labor unions, luncheon clubs, chamber of commerce, and so on, will co-operate in various types of projects. The intimate participation of local persons with knowledge and ability will be sought in carrying out all the activities.

*Reason for the Selection of a Particular County*

Greenville County, South Carolina, is typical of many counties of the Piedmont South. A small city is the center of a large and thriving textile manufacturing industry and diversified farming. With a progressive outlook and a fine civic spirit, excellent co-operation with the various community agencies should be secured. Greenville County will serve as a laboratory for discovering and developing the abilities of the average urban and rural Southerner.

*Co-operation with Furman University*

The proposed plan is concerned with training future leaders for community programs in the South as well as with the development of an adult project in Greenville. In an attempt to give future social workers, teachers, housewives, lawyers, doctors, and others an understanding of the need for building an enlightened and happy community life, an adult education course has been projected at Furman University. This course will survey the history and philosophy of adult education, evaluate many types of programs inaugurated in this and other countries, give instruction and training in the methods of adult education, and develop future leaders by having students participate in the projects of the Greenville County Community Program.

*Value of the Program to the Community and the Nation*

A. The program is expected to demonstrate:

1. How the leisure time of the Southern city dweller, farmer, and mill operative can be profitably spent.

2. How local leaders may be trained so that adult projects will become community led and directed

3 How the various community agencies may be utilized, supplemented, and modified in a vital program of adult education

4 How students in a Southern college may be given instruction and training in leading community programs.

B A successful program developed in Greenville County, South Carolina, will have wide application, since there are many similar counties in the South

C An essential part of the program will be the preparation and publication of materials of value to leaders of communities similar to Greenville, which wish to inaugurate adult programs The following types of publications are indicated

1. A popularly written report of the project

2. Problems and techniques of administering adult programs

3 Curricula materials suitable to be put in the hands of adult classes in other communities.

4. Materials on the techniques of training adult leaders

D An evaluation of the projects will be an integral part of the program This will be designed to present tangible results to other adult education groups and to discover practical methods of measurement A demonstration of many ways of determining the strong and weak points of the program will be attempted. These methods will include.

1. Records of every project—its inception, difficulties, and accomplishments: a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, minutes of meetings, stenographic reports of some discussions, and incidental notes of officers and staff members.

2. Case studies and anecdotes of group members during and after participation.

3. Community statistics on health, movie and lecture attendance, library and newspaper circulation, etc.

4. Informal tests and written tests adapted to adult levels.

#### *Types of Projects for the Greenville County Community Program*

The difference between adult education and the other activities of adults—all of which are educative—is the self-consciousness of adult education It recognizes objectives and goals and seeks the best ways of attaining them by giving the maximum opportunity

for development to every individual. It perceives common causes in diverse agencies. There are two functions of the adult education program:

- A To make the present organizations more efficient in their functioning This may be done by
  - 1 Setting up a planning council that will seek for the long-range objectives of adult education and discover the place of each agency in contributing to the attainment of the goals
  - 2 Aiding in the planning of programs, the discovery of materials, etc., with the purpose of helping each organization to attain its own objectives more efficiently and to contribute its share to the larger aims of the community council
  - 3. Assisting organizations through developing leaders
- B To inaugurate new programs To this end the following procedures are indicated.
  - 1. Utilizing studies, researches, and the ideas of the planning council in finding and developing new activities.
  - 2 Arousing interest in hitherto untouched social problems and guiding the attempts to discuss and act upon them
  - 3. Organizing a clearinghouse for information about the local and national agencies which perform services to adult education.
  - 4 Aiding in the development of leaders at Furman University.

#### *Types of Services That May Be Rendered Existing Agencies*

- 1. Assistance to groups in the solution of problems which arise within the organization.
- 2 A file of suggestions for programs that have been successful elsewhere.
- 3 Talks to different organizations in which their contribution to the objectives of adult education is considered.
- 4 A file of available literature on topics of interest to the community The addresses of sources of other material
- 5. A lecture bureau service
- 6. A teacher-training class for the instructors of adult Sunday School groups.
- 7. Formal and informal training groups for leaders.

#### *Types of New Organizations That May Be Established*

- A To aid in understanding social problems
  - 1. A city forum which will consider such topics as the following.

- a. The prospects of Southern agriculture.
    - b. The South and the New Deal philosophy.
    - c. Appreciation of the cinema in Greenville County.
  2. Discussion groups that will aid the forum in the city and county.
  3. Feature articles in the local papers on the various vocational possibilities for Southern boys and girls
  4. A vocational service to boys and girls of the county and city.
  5. Radio broadcasts—weekly talks by competent and lively speakers on topics of community interest.
  6. Book review page in the Sunday *Greenville News*.
- B. To aid in utilizing leisure time more profitably.
  1. Folk art groups.
    - a. Singing clubs
    - b. Folk dancing groups
    - c. Quilting bees
    - d. Basket making groups
  2. Hobby groups
    - a. Local history club
    - b. Sculpturing group.
    - c. Creative writing club.
    - d. Embroidery exhibits

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION FOR THE GREENVILLE COUNTY  
COMMUNITY PROGRAM, GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

*The Council*

*Officers of the Council* (President, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer), to serve as

1. Advisers in the formulation of the chief policies of the program.
2. Custodians of the funds of the projects

*Members of the Council* (Thirty citizens representing all groups in the city and county), to serve as

1. Advisers with the officers and directors in outlining the chief policies of the program.



*The Administrative Staff*

*Director*, to serve as

- 1 General supervisor of the program
- 2 Director of the policies.
3. Educator of the leaders in the various activities
4. Leader of some projects.
- 5 Co-ordinator with the community and its educative agencies.

*Associate Director*, to serve as

- 1 Consultant on the general policies
2. Chairman of the curriculum production group.
3. Developer of projects.
- 4 Educator of many leaders
5. Leader of projects

*Consultants*, to serve as

1. Advisers in formulating the major policies
- 2 Field visitors for the program.

*Office Secretary*, to serve as

1. Stenographer
- 2 Custodian of the records, stenographic reports, mimeograph materials, diaries, files, books, pamphlets, etc

*Traveling Expenses for the Leaders and Assistants*

- 1 Gasoline for automobiles.
- 2 Bus and train fare

*Supplies*

- 1 Books and pamphlets
- 2 Other teaching materials.
3. Office supplies.

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## VITA

Ralph Muse Lyon was born in Abbeville, South Carolina, on November 25, 1902. He attended the public schools of the town and completed his undergraduate education at The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina. After teaching in the schools of the state, Mr. Lyon studied for the master's degree in history which he received from the University of North Carolina in 1926. He returned to The Citadel as assistant professor of history in the fall of 1926. Since then he has been, successively, assistant professor of history, assistant professor of education, and associate professor of education at The Citadel. In 1930-1931 Mr. Lyon was teaching fellow in education at the University of North Carolina, and from 1932 to 1934 he held General Education Board fellowships to Teachers College, Columbia University. In 1936 Mr. Lyon became professor of education in Furman University and educational director of The Greenville County Council for Community Development.